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THE DUBLIN REVIEW

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The 20th of July and the
German Catholics

DR. PAULUS VAN HUSEN

Towards the Solution of the
German Problem

KARL REIMANN

The Confessing Church —
Today and Tomorrow

PASTOR WERNER KOCH

The Unity of History

THEODOR HAECKER

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The Dublin Review

JULY, 1946

No. 438

THE 20TH OF JULY AND THE GERMAN CATHOLICS

By DR. PAULUS VAN HUSEN

ON 20 July, 1944, Colonel Count Stauffenberg put a time-bomb into an attaché case and left it in a drawing-room at Hitler's headquarters, where he had been ordered to attend a meeting with Hitler. He went away unseen, waited outside for the explosion and flew back to Berlin in order to take up military leadership in the enterprise whose object was the overthrow of the Nazi régime. The bomb, however, had only slightly injured Hitler and hit a few other persons. The purpose of the enterprise was to rally army and people through the shock of Hitler's death, to overthrow the Nazi régime and to establish a new government. Stauffenberg, who was Chief of Staff of the home army, issued in Berlin at once the order for mobilization of the entire home army; the mobilization order had been previously planned and designed in agreement with the Nazi Party in case of inner riots. It was obeyed in many places, such as Berlin, where the troops from the training camps, particularly panzer units, began to rally. The scheme, however, eventually failed and the military conspirators were overcome in Bandlerstrasse 10 (the headquarters of the General Staff in Berlin). Stauffenberg was shot immediately, while many others were put on trial and condemned in a publicity proceeding by a people's court and hanged in August. These were the main reasons of the failure:

1. Owing to the pressure of the Gestapo and to the fact that the entire army was permeated with Nazis it was impossible to win over a complete unit or even a majority of officers. Thus everything had to depend on the psychological effect of the shock of Hitler's death, which did not take place.

2. The leadership of the enterprise was handicapped by the fact that Stauffenberg had to act in Hitler's headquarters while being at the same time indispensable in Berlin to take up military command. This could not be avoided, since no other officer willing to do the work had access to Hitler.

3. The plot had to be carried out in utmost haste; two Social Democrats who were involved in the political part of the scheme had been arrested by the Gestapo on 5 July when they tried to

contact Communists to explain to them that there was no intention of establishing military dictatorship. Among the Communists they had contacted was an agent of the Gestapo, and it was to be feared that the two arrested men would be forced either by torture or by injections to give away the secret. There are indeed certain indications that the Gestapo was on the track of the plot on the morning of 20 July.

4. The inner political situation was not yet ripe in spite of all that had happened, or rather the people were much too terrorized and apathetic and had not the moral strength to answer the signal of liberty.

Particularly involved in the military part of the plot were the retired Generals Beck, Witzleben and Höppner; General Olbrich, still in active service as deputy of the C.-in-C. of the home army; General Wagner, the Quartermaster-General of the Field Army, and General Stieff, the chief of the organization department of the General Staff: all responsible men of highest importance. These men had already participated in designs for the overthrow of Nazism as early as 1939. They kept in close touch with the political circles. Here the former Oberbürgermeister, Görden, was actively reconciling and gathering leading personalities before 1933.

Moreover, there was a circle of men round Popitz, the Prussian Minister of Finance, which, however, could hardly be expected to play any decisive rôle in spite of their good intentions, since Popitz himself had held his important post under the Hitler régime though he secretly opposed the party and tried to impede it.

Finally there was the so-called "Kreisauer" circle, a group of men who gathered round Count Moltke's residence. They had started their discussions in 1940 and tried to prepare a programme on a Christian foundation. Eventually, when it became clear that the military circles preferred to act in alliance with Görden, Kreisau's men put themselves at his disposal at once. Consequently Peter York became one of the main actors in the plot. As an intimate friend of Stauffenberg he became the link between the military and political camps when Moltke was arrested in January 1944.

The significant feature of all political resistance during the Nazi period was that there could be no question of creating any kind of counter-movement or of organizing such movement. The pressure of the Gestapo with their terror methods made any attempt at organization impossible. The only thing to do was to gather a strictly limited circle of men in order to consider and discuss the principles and measures for future action and to find locally a few reliable men here and there who were ready to act together when the time came.

There was full agreement among all men concerned that only

the armed forces could displace the Hitler régime. The despotism was so strong, the enslavement and disintegration of the masses so advanced, and all the natural communities, including families, so disorganized and disintegrated, that the only means of displacing the evil was force. This, however, could be achieved only by the army. The army was the only possible instrument for the release for which the better part of the people had hoped for years in vain. No initiative could be expected from the working class, since the individual worker was powerless in face of the terror. Otherwise the ten millions of foreign labourers, who had a better inner organization and co-operation than was possible for the German workers, would have taken the initiative—at least in recent years. That those foreigners could achieve nothing, even by sabotage, is clearly shown by the steadily decreasing number of acts of sabotage in the statistics of the O.K.W.

However much it was acknowledged that the initiative must spring from the army, there was full agreement that no military dictatorship must be established. The generals were sensible enough to see that they could not tackle the problem in a purely military way. They were, moreover, honest and decent men. They would have observed the agreement and immediately subordinated the army to a political government.

There was a clear-cut division of tasks. The soldiers had to carry out the revolution and to work out all the details to this end on their own responsibility and in strict secrecy. The politicians, in turn, had to plan for the future and to establish personal contacts to form a new government.

I think that these designs and ideas originated in the intimate circle round Moltke and York and they formulated and circulated them. Owing to the close contact between the Kreisauer circle and the group of Gerdeler, continually kept up through the intermediaries, Count Schulneberg and Leber, the ideas originated from Kreisau were communicated to the men round Gerdeler and met with full agreement. Also officers such as Stauffenberg shared these ideas.

The only institutions which the Nazis have been unable to destroy were the Christian churches. In spite of all their Satanic devices they could not achieve their ends either by lies or by violence. A strong hatred of the regime also existed in large sections of the working class. These sections had to be approached; they were expected to co-operate in future reconstruction.

The first obstacle which had to be overcome was the friction between Catholics and Protestants, deeply rooted for centuries and aggravated by Bismarck's *Kulturkampf*. It had proved impossible to establish any real co-operation between these two sections in

national life until 1933, though attempts were not lacking (Treviranus). The general oppression of all Christians in Germany, however, disposed them to set aside separating issues and to emphasize the common values, the common possession of the Good News and the Communion of Saints in Christ. These ideas were spreading under the Nazi terror and led to contacts being established between ecclesiastical leaders. Moltke and York, however, were the first to tackle these questions practically; they established a circle of Catholics and Protestants in which these issues were discussed and formulated. They were devout evangelical Christians, and by their education, their intellectual and cultural standard and their intellectual position they were particularly well placed to take up the leadership, since they could rely on a willing response in both Christian camps.

The second and still greater difficulty was the establishment of a link and a community of spirits with the working class. It was clear that this was not easy, and with regard to the Communists even dangerous. But the attempts to approach the Social Democrats were very successful. A number of former Socialist leaders were approached and they fully shared the design to rebuild German national life on a Christian basis. This fact was the more significant since the German Democratic Party—as distinct from the Labour Party—had been committed to a definite ideology, the materialistic and Marxist conception of history. These Social Democrats saw by their personal lives and by the needs of their people that the reconstruction of Germany had to be based on Christian principles or there would be no hope of reconstruction at all. Apart from religious considerations, they came to this conclusion by the fact that the only open resistance to the Nazis came from the Christian camp. It is true that a great number of Social Democrats and Communists have been imprisoned, tortured and murdered. But without diminishing their loyalty and courageous sufferings it must be borne in mind that these men were captured by the Gestapo because of their previous loyalty to their parties or because of an occasional personal courageous criticism. The Bishops and the clergy, however, as a part of their office kept on openly warning the people of the aberrations and the immorality of the Nazi doctrines. There was no other institution in Germany which would have dared to do so. Neither the universities, the centres of intellectual life; nor the Law Courts as the national conscience; nor the T.U. as the protection of the workers from the omnipotence of the State—none of these in fact raised their voices. It was the ultimate consolation of the tortured people to know that at least their spiritual shepherds remained vocal.

Some laymen, to be sure, who had felt the burden on their

shoulders had wished for an earlier and clearer condemnation of Nazism such as was published by the Bishops in Holland. Requests of this kind were made to the ecclesiastical authorities, and there are various reasons why these requests were not complied with at once and generally. In evangelical circles there was subconsciously still the historically strong allegiance to the State and a somewhat over-emphasized respect for its God-willed authority. To this, manifold ecclesiastical difficulties must be added which had first to be removed; these problems required careful consideration and new definition before the confessing Church could make a stand against Satan. The main obstruction within the Catholic Church may have been that she was closely linked with the Centre Party until 1933 and had gradually to detach herself from this relationship in face of continual malicious attacks against any "meddling of religion and party politics". To this must be added the burden of the Concordat which the Nazi régime had concluded under the Catholic name of Herr von Papen; the Church was anxious not to provide reasons for breaking this treaty. Some memories of events in the Reformation times, when softer action might have spared some tragedies, may also have played their part. The habit of the Church to think in terms of ages and centuries always brings about a certain detachment from events of the day, and there may have been some hope that the waves would subside as in Italy, where Fascism did not degenerate into such brutal forms as did National Socialism. It must be said that after a time of consideration the shepherds of the Christian flocks loyally and courageously fulfilled their missions as guardians, and names such as Niemöller, Galen and Preysing acquired historical significance. An innumerable multitude of martyrs followed the path of Thomas More, and reliable detailed statistics are still lacking. If the number of victims in the evangelical camp is smaller, this is due to the fact, now established by documentary evidence, that the Catholic Church was regarded by the Nazis as enemy number one. The Protestant clergy's readiness for sacrifices, however, must be valued the more highly, since they risked, at the same time, the well-being of their families.

While agreement among the Catholics, Protestants and Social Democrats on Christian principles was a basis of a future political programme, three facts must be underlined. First, there was no intention on the part of the Churches to establish any sway over secular matters. In order to avoid any mistake of this kind the clergy had to keep aloof from all party political activity. This was in accordance with the intentions of the Holy See. Any kind of "clericalism" was thus banished.

Secondly, the definitely Christian programme could not allow

others to be oppressed. Complete fairness was guaranteed by the collaboration of the Social Democrats. The idea was that the Christian values, which once more had proved living and vigorous agencies in the struggle against Nazism, should be made the foundations and the guiding principle in national reconstruction. True Christianity, however, means respect for the dignity and freedom of one's fellow men according to its supreme law: the love of one's neighbour in God.

Thirdly, there were considerable doubts in the beginning whether the word "Christian" should be used as the catchword of the new programme, since so often in history it has been misused, and in recent times even for political ends. The essence of Man is weakness from original sin. Man therefore will always err and he can but do his best to be a Christian. This walking on a thin edge, however, must not prevent him from professing his allegiance to Christ and His doctrine and from doing so in national and public life. It was just this splitting up of human life into a private-religious and a public-religious sphere which had paved the road for the criminal doctrines of National Socialism. From this follows the unambiguous profession of Christian doctrine as the foundation of the new national life: *Omnia instaurare in Christo!*

Any attempt at mechanically imposing Christian principles upon a people that had become partly un-Christian and immoral seemed in itself un-Christian and doomed to failure. Hence it was realized that the supreme aim had to be spiritual renewal of the individual—that "metanoete" which St. John had proclaimed in the desert two thousand years ago. The renewed human soul finds again human dignity that had been crushed for twelve years: "Deus qui humanam dignitatem mirabiliter condidisti ac mirabiliter reformasti." From similarity to God springs the personal responsibility of man for his family; and the hierarchical order of communities in national life and in culture and economy. According to this guiding idea a detailed plan was worked out for re-establishing law, independent law courts, punishment of war criminals by an international law court, displacement of Nazi Party members from key positions in cultural, economic and political life, and the punishment of offences and crimes according to individual personal guilt. Democratic self-administration, new partitions of the Reich into federative provinces, parcelling-out of Prussia, abolition of bureaucratic centralism. This plan abandoned a hypertrophied conception of sovereignty and aimed at a European federation and an international world-organization, at nationalization of key industries, a sound agrarian reform, a sound balance of social tensions and above all security for parental rights of education in denominational schools and the final settlement of the relations of

Church and State according to a free agreement between them. These were the main items for which by hard work formulae were found to re-establish the true order of values. It was a dynamic programme, and consequently met with some distrust in many people more statically minded who would have preferred something simpler following the lines of the time before 1933.

Finally, after all these problems, the moral and religious question of principle was to be considered: How could Christians plot against the established authority? How could Christians raise their hands against the head of the State? These are grave and weighty problems of which many of the men concerned, owing to the need for action and to their ignorance of detail, were certainly unaware. The leading men, however, struggled with these issues; their action was delayed for long by their doubts.

The problem is as old as Christianity, and as an issue of natural morality even older. There is general agreement in Christian moral theology that obedience and respect is due to the authority of the State. God's word, the Fathers of the Church, the doctors of the Church and Papal decisions leave no doubt. On the other hand, there is an established general opinion that the citizens not only may deny obedience to immoral rules of governments which defy Divine or natural law, but that it is their duty to do so, since God is to be obeyed before men. This is so-called passive resistance. If all the Germans had observed this principle, clearly expressed by the Church and lastly by Pope Leo XIII, and had put it into practice against Hitler from the beginning, the problem of 20 July would never have arisen. Those Germans who failed to do so cannot claim the right now to be judges of Stauffenberg's conscience.

Distinctions have been drawn between the *tyrannus usurpationis*, the ruler who was illegal and illegitimate from the beginning, and the *tyrannus regiminis*, the legitimate sovereign, who exercises his sovereign right unjustly and cruelly. It was conceded that the first might even be killed if no other means of removing him could be found. It is doubtful whether Hitler was a *tyrannus usurpationis*; he himself rejected any suggestion of this kind and liked to emphasize his legal and legitimate position. The distinction does not exist in modern conditions but is entirely based on the significance of princely or royal authority, whose legality is much easier to examine.

The schoolmen did not acknowledge forcible displacement as the proper way to remove an unjust ruler, but insisted on legal proceedings such as the solution of the oath of allegiance by the Pope (*Thomas De Reg. Princ.*, 1, 6). Can we say how Thomas would decide this problem in a world which no longer submits to the authority of a higher order? In the Middle Ages John of Salisbury held the opinion that the killing of a tyrant was permissible. Jean

Petit advocated this principle, while Gerson contested it. The Council of Constance did not condemn Jean Petit totally, though it rejected his doctrine that "a tyrant should and must be killed by any of his vassals or subjects". If all these clauses and conditions are abstracted the principle itself seems to be affirmed. The reformers, except Luther, mostly advocated active resistance. In the seventeenth century the doctrine of the so-called "*monarchomachists*" was applied to the more or less clearly expressed principle of people's sovereignty; this application, however, cannot be accepted from the Catholic point of view, since the Church rejects this kind of absolute sovereignty based upon purely natural law. But also from the Catholic camp came fervent defenders (Mariana, Buserbaum) of active resistance in the seventeenth century, who maintained that a private individual supported by the obvious general will of the people may kill the tyrant if his displacement by the people is impossible. Suarez opposed this *privata auctoritas* and was approved by the Jesuits and theologians in general. This opinion of the Jesuits was frequently abused in the nineteenth century and misrepresented as if the Jesuits had simply advocated the assassination of the king for the benefit of the Church. In an apologetic defence against this nonsense the marks were overstepped and—perhaps also from a certain bourgeois convenience—the active resistance was rejected altogether. The prohibition of revolution in the Syllabus (n. 63) and by Leo XIII (*Immortale Dei*) seems to me not to apply to the extreme cases of emergency and of the actual right of active resistance, but only to revolution against the established government from reasons of political expediency for which the word "revolution" is mostly used today.

I should not as a layman claim authority to decide upon this ponderous theological problem; but it seems clear to me that the issue is at least undecided by the authority of the Church and thus doubtful and lacking the final decision of the Church. In this case, however, the individual man can safely follow his own conscience according to the principle "*in dubio libertas*".

Those who died on 20 July took their moral responsibility seriously. Almost all of them were devout Christians. Stauffenberg himself was a highly cultivated man and a fervent Catholic. He wore a medal of Our Lady under his colonel's uniform. He was the opposite of a military bravo, and was a highly cultured man with that kind of fortitude that springs from culture.

There is no doubt that the idea of a bomb endangering other officers indiscriminately did not appeal to the Germans, to whom this kind of weapon was always repugnant. The bomb, however, was the only chance left to Stauffenberg, since he was an invalid and had lost his right hand and one eye, and had had

his left hand mutilated in the war in Africa. It had been planned long ago to seize Hitler's headquarters and his person by a military raid, and time and again this scheme was considered. For a *coup de main* of this kind, however, at least an entire panzer division would have been needed to match the elaborate defence measures of the Nazis. Owing to the terror and the permeation of all army units by Nazis such action was out of the question, as anybody conversant with the conditions will confirm.

The world is apt to judge according to success or failure. As soon, however, as we have gained some distant view of the event history will pay homage to the dead of 20 July as men who did not hesitate to risk their lives in order to spare their people and the world another million deaths and to rescue a little honour for Germany.

I ask the reader's prayers for their souls.

PAULUS VAN HUSEN.

TOWARDS THE SOLUTION OF THE GERMAN PROBLEM

By KARL REIMANN

THE war in Europe has been over more than a year. The National-Socialist régime has collapsed: its leaders rendered harmless. But we have come no nearer to solving the German problem. Clearing of debris, repair of railways and bridges, resumption of work in the coal-mines has nothing to do with the German problem as such. The fact that German children have started to attend school, that newspapers poor in size and content are appearing again, that the Germans are allowed to rally in political parties, does not mean that a normal political life has developed. Comparisons with our own public life are misleading and will result in disaster.

One fundamental fact cannot be ignored: Germany has ceased to be a political conception. To describe the Germany of today, in Parliament as well as in the press, as a political entity is due either to ignorance or to the intention of misleading the public. Such a

Germany does not exist; it cannot even be made to appear by invoking the Potsdam Conference, whose object it was to make Germany an economic entity fit to be the foundation for the livelihood and existence of 70 million people. The frailty of the Potsdam Agreement becomes obvious in the fact that Germany has no government of her own but four different executive governments. And these four governments, as might have been reasonably expected, neither co-ordinate their plans nor practise any consideration for one another. Each of the four governments acts according to its own discretion and advantage. Germany is today the testing-ground for "Democracy" of four different shades. But it is not left to the Germans to decide which of these four conceptions of "Democracy" they would like to adopt.

In the Russian zone of occupation the sovietization in the economic, political, and recently even in the cultural, sphere is being accomplished with breath-taking speed. East of the Elbe and under the eyes of the Allied Control Council, the highest executive power in Germany, we can watch the erection of a Soviet system. This in itself contradicts the principle laid down at Potsdam of treating Germany as an economic whole.

The British Government considers the introduction of the English system of self-government as the best method to democratize Germany, not taking into consideration the fact that the old and much more highly developed German system of self-government is so deeply rooted within the German people that not even the National-Socialist régime was able entirely to destroy it.

While three occupation forces dispute over the political maturity of the German people and deny to them the ability of self-government, the American Military Government introduced into their zone of occupation, a few weeks after the collapse of Germany, three German County Governments (*Landesregierungen*). In the American zone elections have already been held in all communities up to 20,000 inhabitants as well as for the District Councils. The American Military Government appeared to find the German people mature enough to do so.

The French go their own way. But their generosity in all cultural matters (it was not by accident that the first German periodicals of European standard appeared in the French zone of occupation) cannot conceal the fact that France's policy is exclusively guided by her endeavour to sweeten for the German population of that zone the economic and perhaps even political separation of their homeland from Germany. The French are courting the Germans. They listen to complaints, investigate them and are trying to remedy grievances. By their complacency the French would soften any resentment of the fact that it is the

French who, through their veto in the Allied Control Council, are hindering the setting-up of a Central Administration for Germany. By this attitude they attempt to force a separation of the Saar from Germany, the formation of an autonomous Rhineland and the internationalization of the Ruhr. By preventing the setting-up of a Central Administration as a step towards a Central Government a condition of chaos is being fostered which, ultimately, will lead to a domination by the mob: a condition of permanent revolution, as the historians call it. This condition, unique in the history of Europe, is being exploited by forces encouraged and backed by Moscow and the Soviet organs, who try to form a system of government similar to those in Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Poland and Hungary. The differences between the Soviet and Western zones of occupation are already so enormous that one is entitled to talk of two Germanies.

The fundamental differences between East and West are to be found in the economic sphere; they are conspicuous in political life and unmistakably apparent in cultural development.

The Russian Military Government granted permission for political activities long before any formation of political parties was allowed in the Western zones. After twelve years of exile all prominent Communist leaders followed on the heels of the Russian Army and entered Berlin together with them. Permission to start their political activities was granted first to the Communist Party, then to the Social-Democratic Party, the Christian-Democratic Union and the Liberal-Democrats. According to the pattern introduced in the border states of Soviet-Russia, all four parties were united in one *bloc*. Whoever did not join was suspected of being a "Fascist". "Democracy" with a *bloc*-system under the supervision and totalitarian hegemony of one party is, however, a contradiction. As the Soviets call themselves *the* representatives of the "purest Democracy", why should they change their methods in different countries?

It was a matter of course that the Communists at once occupied all the key positions in the State Administration, in town and country, in industry and transport. Communists dominated police and radio, Labour offices and welfare organizations, the entire public life. Wherever they had not sufficient man-power available, a reliable Social-Democrat was entrusted with the task. In order to create a "democratic" appearance in the eyes of the West a Christian-Democrat or a Liberal-Democrat was given a conspicuous post; but already his deputy and his subaltern officials were and are most trustworthy Communists.

Meanwhile the fusion of the Communist Party with the Social-Democratic Party has been completed. It has failed in those

sectors of Berlin which are governed by the Western Powers. But in the provinces where no Social-Democrat would have dared to oppose or sabotage this amalgamation it was carried out all the more thoroughly and unscrupulously. Opposition of that kind in the Soviet zone endangers one's life.

It is revealing that the majority of the opponents to the United Socialist Party (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei*) among the Social-Democrats are in favour of a "collaboration" with the Communists, thus showing that the difference between the two Marxist ideologies is not so much a matter of principle as of a tactical-technical nature. The Social-Democrats were frightened by the terror used, the methods employed and the early date of the fusion dictated by Moscow. The opposition of the Social-Democrats to the Communists is not due to fundamental divergencies and the amalgamation will undoubtedly extend across the Elbe sooner or later.

The differences between the East and the West are greatest in the economic sphere. Land and industry in the Soviet zone have been expropriated without compensation. It was impossible for the Christian-Democratic Union to agree to such measures on fundamental principles. The Christian-Democrats were never opposed to land-reform as such (as has been asserted in a demagogic way in order to compromise them in public), but they are opposed on the following four points:

1. That the expropriation was carried out without any compensation;
2. That not only big estates were divided into lots but also small ones;
3. That all estate owners were expropriated irrespective of whether they were National-Socialists or not and that they were not allowed to keep even a fraction of their estate;
4. That the holdings so created are so small that prosperity for the peasantry is impossible and a complete failure of the farms inevitable. What was the result of the raising of these objections against this kind of "land-reform" by the Christian-Democrats? Their leader, Dr. Hermes (Catholic), and Dr. Schreiber (Protestant), both outstanding agricultural experts, both emphatic champions for a true land-reform, had to relinquish their party commissions because, as they were told cynically by Russian officials, "they have Marshal Zhukow's confidence no longer".

The purpose of this land-reform is most obvious. Russia is drawing a cordon round her borders where the standard of living is to be kept as low as it is in Russia proper. The rank and file of the Russian Army are not to make any comparison that might make them consider the fact that man in a foreign country, even

under the worst conditions, lives at a higher standard than the Russians under the highly-praised Soviet régime, where poverty is evenly spread out and everyone is compelled to live the same life of distress and misery. Through this land-reform the new settler is to be brought automatically into a "voluntary" collective-system as he is unable to exist on his own. He is forced to borrow whatever machinery or tools he needs from the State or Municipal Model Estates. At the same time industrial workers are compelled to spend their Sundays on a farm to "teach" the farmer the use of fertilizer! The real reason behind it is to propagate a better understanding between the peasants and the industrial workers.

Industry in the Russian-occupied zone is almost entirely sovietized. Even small workshops are taken over by "public hand". At first only those large plants were sovietized which were owned or administered by National-Socialists and war criminals. But today all industries are confiscated where any shareholder was a member of the party, even undertakings that belonged to well-known anti-Nazis. All talks about fostering private enterprise and the temporary slowing-down of the sovietization serve only to deceive the world.

The Trade Unions are equally dominated by the Communists. Officially they are supposed to be uniform and without party distinction (above parties) and including members of all parties, not only Communists and Social-Democrats but also Christian-Democrats and Liberals. The same applies to Co-operatives.

As in the Soviet Union, all decisions within the Russian zone are being ostensibly made by the workers. The notorious "initiative of the people" is being developed within the factories. All plans of the leaders are imputed to the workers. The worker has to decide the fate and destiny of the people; only the worker and nobody else is supposed to express an opinion. But these decisions are by no means limited to problems of industry, politics or social-welfare of the workers. They reach into every sphere of life. Even problems like the termination of pregnancy are discussed in factory meetings. These methods of forming political opinions within the factories, hitherto unknown in Germany, are driving the Christian-Democrats and Liberals *ipso facto* into the background; the Social-Democrats have nothing to say, as they have practically ceased to exist as a party since their fusion. The Christian-Democratic paper *Neue Zeit* has been standardized to the Soviet pattern after the forced change-over of the party leaders as mentioned above.

The trend in the cultural sphere is clearly indicated by the ban on all religious education in the schools. It was declared that the schools in the Soviet zone are entirely the responsibility of the State. Private schools are prohibited; religious instruction is confined to the churches and not to be given on school premises. There is, of

course, no mention of it in the school-syllabus. Cardinal Count Preysing, Bishop of Berlin, protested energetically against the complete disregard of the rights of the parents, a protest which could not very well be ignored by the Allied Control Council. Exceptions were therefore made for the non-Russian sectors of Berlin; the Municipal Administration of Berlin was allowed to reintroduce religious instruction into the general syllabus. The *Einheitsschule* (State-school), introduced and continued in the Russian zone, comprises a complete education from the Kindergarten to the Universities. The children attend the Kindergarten when five years old; it is a sort of preparatory school. Next comes the *Grundschule*, taking eight years to complete. In its fifth form the children learn one foreign language: Russian. Not more than four years are provided for the higher schools (*Aufbauschule*), to which only specially selected, highly gifted pupils are admitted. In Berlin, where the other Allies have still some say in the matter, the Jesuits succeeded in reopening their well-known Grammar School, *Gymnasium am Lietzensee*. It is the one and only Public School for the whole of Middle and Eastern Germany!

To the slogan, "One party, one Trade Union, one Co-operative, one Youth Organization", a chorus repeated over and over again at the beginning of the National-Socialist access to power, has now been added: "one Cultural Organization" (*Kulturbund*).

Cultural life in the Russian zone of occupation was nationalized and sovietized by the *Freie deutsche Kulturbund*. Leader of this organization is the Communist writer Joh. R. Becher; three other Communist writers, Plivier, Scharrer and Erich Weinert, are his deputies. During the war all three were engaged in propaganda broadcast over Radio Moscow. The Theatre is monopolized by the Communists Wangenheim and Fr. Wolf.

The attitude towards the Church can be summed up in four words: she is still tolerated. The Church is completely banned from all public life. The Church is denied the right of educating youth. In Saxony all children hitherto cared for by charitable organizations of the Churches have been taken away from them and placed in municipal orphanages or institutions. The Catholic *Caritasverband* and the Protestant *Innere Mission* have been warned that their charitable functions will have to be terminated.

Politics in the Soviet zone is entirely totalitarian. No section of public life has been left untouched by totalitarianism. Former National-Socialists have to be re-educated in two aspects only: their attitude towards the Jewish race and their attitude towards Russia; otherwise they can remain as they were and as they are. There is no freedom of speech, no freedom of press, no freedom of initiative or enterprise; everything is collective, including amuse-

ment and recreation, which are equally organized. And there is no responsibility either. Wilhelm Pieck is the *Fuehrer*, and on his birthday he receives gifts from workers and peasants and is equally celebrated as once was Hitler. The only difference is that Hitler was independent, Pieck is the handy man of a foreign Power. The government of the zone, imposed by the Russians, and with a preponderance of Communists, call themselves the Central Government. As it is impossible for such a "Government" to have a foreign policy, they use the methods of the fifth column. The Communists appeal to the followers of Hitler; they are goading Nationalism into creating and fostering an anti-Western frame of mind directed especially against Great Britain. Russia has done likewise in Poland, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Bulgaria, where anti-British feelings are running high.

With the fusion of the Marxist parties the sovietization of the Russian zone of occupation has reached a decisive phase. At the same time it is totally irrelevant whether this newly formed party (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei*) is recognized in Berlin by the Allied Control Council or not. Berlin is, after all, not the Russian zone, yet.

There can be no doubt that the policy in the Russian zone is aimed at drawing these German territories into the Russian sphere of influence with all the possibilities at the disposal of Russia and with a speed causing some concern to British foreign policy. This is the reason why the British Government sided unmistakably with the Social-Democrats in the question of the amalgamation of the two Marxist parties. The British Government regards the Social-Democratic Party as the one and only bulwark against the Communist onslaught from the East. Therefore the British Government is trying to make the Social-Democratic Party the leading political party and the decisive political factor in the British zone. Owing to the equation of this party with the British Labour Party (a disastrous blunder) the Social-Democrats are granted privileges within the British zone with complete disregard of the religious, cultural and political conviction and composition of the population of these regions. Social-Democrats are installed in posts to which they have no claim. Socialist Mayors and Lord Mayors are forced upon towns which never had a Marxist majority. Catholic districts which, in the last democratic elections before 1933, returned a very small minority of Social-Democrats have now Social-Democratic District Officers (*Landraete*) forced on them. Institutions formerly belonging to National-Socialist organizations are now preferably handed over to Social-Democratic welfare organizations and not to the Catholic *Caritasverband* or the Protestant *Innere Mission*, who have equally to bear the heavy burden of providing and caring for the masses of refugees from the East.

On the occasion of repatriation of German prisoners of war in Great Britain it was to be noticed that prisoners displaying a Socialist attitude were favoured. With one single exception only Socialist and, peculiarly enough, Communist exiles were allowed to return to Germany—apparently to bolster up the weak position of the Marxist parties in the Western zone.

The British and American military organs are apparently not satisfied with only the moral furtherance of the political left. Institutions like holiday camps and nurseries, etc., which formerly belonged to National-Socialist organizations, are preferably handed over to Social-Democratic welfare organizations and not to the Catholic *Caritasverband* or the Protestant *Innere Mission*, preoccupied with Eastern refugees.

This open partiality for the left makes itself clearly felt in the character of the German press controlled by the Military Government. The scheme according to which the circulation figure of newspapers has been worked out is completely incomprehensible. The result of the British press policy is that two thirds of the preponderant Christian population in the British zone of occupation is forced to read Marxist newspapers, which appear four times a week, whereas the Christian paper is allowed to appear only twice weekly. Thanks to this policy, the papers of the left are showing circulations never attained before 1933, as, with some exceptions, the territories within the British zone of occupation always were and still are the strongholds of German Catholicism. It is the territory where Cardinal Galen was born and did his best work; it is the territory where the great social-conscious bishop, *Freiherr von Ketteler*, had his home, and whence many prominent and progressive political leaders of German Catholicism came: *Joseph von Goerres*, the brothers *Reichensperger* and *Ludwig Windhorst*, of whom even *Bismarck* was afraid when he went to the rostrum at the *Reichstag*. And before this people, with such a Catholic tradition, has had opportunity to express itself in free elections, a Socialist régime is forced on them. It is an open secret that the Communists have every possibility of importing any quantity of paper from the Soviet into the British zone, and they are making the most of it in swamping the whole of the country with printed matter of their own. But the refusal of permission for Catholic periodicals is invariably explained by paper shortage.

The same applies to broadcasting. The director of the Cologne Broadcasting Station, installed by the British Military Government, declared publicly that the Cologne programme would be based on the philosophical ideologies of Marx and Engels. Dr. *Adenauer*, the President of the Christian-Democratic Union, rightly declared this viewpoint unbearable to the Christian population of the

Rhineland. Catholics and faithful Protestants sighed with relief when the Third Reich collapsed. They thought that the domination of brute force, political intolerance and evil would vanish for ever. The Christian Churches had every reason to assume that freedom would again prevail, that they would recover the rights taken from them during the last twelve years; rights defended by hundreds of Catholic priests and Confessional Protestant ministers who consequently had to suffer in prisons and concentration camps; rights defended by numberless priests and laymen who had to die as martyrs. There was joy among the Catholics and new hope when the confiscated convents, hospitals and church buildings were returned to them as the rightful owners. But it was not only the confiscation of these well-equipped institutions by the Nazis, painful as it was, that marked the fight of the Third Reich against the Church. The essence of the National-Socialist fight against the Church was to render her powerless, to exclude her completely from all public life, to remove the care of youth and all moral influence from her. And all these twelve years the Church has been fighting for these fundamental rights. The Church has been fighting for free speech, for a say in the education of the youth, for the right to care for the faithful in all spheres of life.

The German Catholics never expected that the occupation forces would re-establish them again in all their rights and in every respect. They knew that rights are not just dealt out, that one has to fight for them even though in general they are recognized. But the Germans had every reason to assume that in principle a readiness to acknowledge the rights of the Church would be shown by those who, in the bitter struggle of this war, constantly pretended to defend Christian culture against new-pagan barbarism. The principal readiness to recognize the Church as a potential factor in the public life of Germany could be presumed from the fact that the diplomatic representatives from the Anglo-Saxon countries and France at the Vatican gave the solemn assurance that the *Reichskonkordat* of 1933 would be recognized and carried out, the same Concordat which was continually abused and broken by Hitler. In this Concordat not only is the Church guaranteed freedom to teach the word of God, and the Bishops their unrestricted contact with the Vatican, but the rights of all Catholics are safeguarded, e.g. the provision of confessional schools.

All the greater was the surprise for the Catholic people of Germany when (after the assurance given to the Holy See by the Western Powers) the British and American Military Governments at the reopening of the schools in their sphere of influence proclaimed the non-confessional uniform school as the new type of school for Germany.

With the introduction of the non-confessional school the tendencies of the Anglo-Saxon occupation forces to foster Socialism and its aims became manifest for the first time. The non-confessional school which excluded all parental and Church influence in the education of the children is an old demand of Social-Democrats in Germany. During the time of the Weimar Republic they failed. But Hitler succeeded and introduced the non-confessional school—one more illustration of the family likeness between the ideologies of Marxism and Nazism. The antagonism of these two ideologies cannot conceal their essential similarity. Linked with the introduction of the non-confessional uniform school was the prohibition of private schools, which, if need be, could have been supported by the German Catholics.

The threat of a State-school-monopoly created by the occupation forces was felt alike by Catholics and Protestants. This State-monopoly would have been in no way different from the National-Socialist form of education.

At a conference at Treysa the Evangelical Church Council demanded religious instruction in all State schools. They did not decide in favour of the confessional school because the Liberal tradition of large Evangelical circles would not allow the highest authority of the Evangelical Church to demand what is provided for Catholics by the *Reichskonkordat*. With very few exceptions there were no Evangelical confessional schools in Germany before 1933. An Evangelical Church leader, however, exceeded the request of Treysa and, together with the Catholics, demanded the confessional school for the Evangelical Church. That Protestants should co-operate with the Catholics in so fundamental a question is unique in the history of the "Land of Reformation".

At the first conference of the German Episcopate after the collapse of the Nazi régime the school question was the Bishops' greatest concern. In their joint Pastoral of 1945 they declared that the Catholics can never give up their confessional schools and that they would again fight for them if need should arise.

This decisive attitude was, however, not sufficient to change the mind of the British and American Military Governments, whose attitude was all the more incomprehensible after their recognition of the Concordat. Only after the intervention of the Vatican were the German administrative authorities advised to invite the parents to decide by vote which type of school they wanted for their children. But only those parents had to go to the polls who were in favour of the confessional school. Supporters of the non-religious schools had no need to go to the polls. To abstain from voting was to vote for the non-religious school.

It was to be hoped that the Socialists would have learned a

lesson from past events and would have given up their hostile attitude towards the Church. But they showed themselves again as the old and bold Free-Thinkers. They made the greatest efforts to keep the parents away from the polls, trying thus to justify the first decision of the Military Governments.

There was no need for the Bishops to appeal to the Catholic parents to go to the polls. The clergy only asked parents to do as their conscience dictated. The result was overwhelming. In the big towns of the Rhineland and Westphalia, not to mention the rural districts, 70 per cent and more voted for the confessional school. In the medium and small towns and in the rural districts the result was 96 to 100 per cent in favour of the confessional school. It was to be noticed that the parents of Protestant children were only slightly less unanimous for the confessional school than the Catholic parents. According to democratic rules, it would have been expected, after this obvious proof, that the British Military Government would take these results into account and abstain from their systematic furtherance of the Marxist left and join forces with those constructive Christian powers who throughout the last twelve years have given proof of their unrelenting hostility towards National-Socialism. But in spite of this the Socialists are still considered as the only guarantors of opposition against the red flood from the East. Liberal and even Conservative newspapers in Great Britain and the U.S.A. are doing their best to convince the public that only a Socialist régime in the West could break the Bolshevik wave. They are trying to justify the attitude of their Military Governments, who, through their unilateral partisanship for Social-Democracy, are rendering themselves the worst service. Because, as has been said before, the Socialists refused the amalgamation with the Communists, the Military Governments are drawing the wrong conclusion in assuming a fundamental antagonism that does not exist. For the Socialists Marxism is not a mere lip-confession. The slogan "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" is also their aim, though postponed at the moment for tactical reasons. This is exactly the difference between the German Social-Democrats, including all the Social-Democrats on the Continent, and the British Labour Party, whose ideological attitude differs fundamentally from Social-Democracy. While the British Labour Party has a positive attitude to Christianity, and prominent workers' leaders make no secret of their religious conviction, the German Social-Democracy is identifying itself with the Free-Thinkers. Therefore no one will ever succeed in winning the Christians by way of Social-Democracy. The Christian German did not yield to Hitler's attempts, and Social-Democracy will succeed no better.

Nobody could deny today that it was the Catholics who played

the greatest part in the resistance against the Nazi régime. Among the inmates of Dachau, when overrun by the liberating troops, no University class was represented there so prominently as the Catholic clergy. The clearest indication that the National-Socialist ideology was never able to pollute Catholicism was the fact that the Theological Faculties were immune from all corruption. At the start of the Nazi régime two Professors of Theology, Eschweiler and Barion, tried to explain and propagate National-Socialism so far as it concerned national and race theories. Both were at once suspended; both submitted to the decision of Rome. A short time afterwards, and in spite of his submission to the Roman decision, the National-Socialist Education authorities offered Professor Barion a chair at the Faculty of Theology of Munich. Contrary to the rules of the *Reichskonkordat*, the authorities had not asked the consent of the Archiepiscopal See. As soon as Cardinal Faulhaber learned of this decision he refused to admit him and prohibited his students to attend the lectures. The result was a conflict with the Ministry of Education and the subsequent closing of the Theological Faculty altogether, which remained closed until 1945. Cardinal Faulhaber preferred this solution to exposing his students to the influence of a Professor who, although readmitted, had to be suspended. It is noteworthy that, in the whole history of the Church, no heresy so dangerous as National-Socialism entirely failed to penetrate into the Theological Faculties. No Social-Democratic or other political leaders ever publicly called their followers to resist injustice and mass-murder as the German Bishops did.

The attitude of the Anglo-Saxon occupation forces in Germany would give the impression that it was *Social-Democracy* which caused trouble to the Hitler régime. Yet it was the *Church* which was labelled "Public Enemy No. 1" at a time when nobody was talking of political parties or Trade Unions any more. There were, doubtless, many organizations—they were forgotten. It might have been expected that the Anglo-Saxon Powers would use for the reconstruction and re-education of Germany those positive forces whose democratic tradition reaches much further back than the appearance of the first Social-Democratic faction in the German Reichstag. And one day even the most ardent sceptic will have to admit that the only bulwark against the onslaught from the East was not the Socialists but those Christians in Germany who have succeeded in overcoming National-Socialism.

KARL REIMANN.

THE CONFESSING CHURCH—TODAY AND TOMORROW

By PASTOR WERNER KOCH

(1) *THE BACKGROUND*

WHEN in 1933 the fact became obvious that the National-Socialist Revolution meant not merely the end of democracy, not only the cruel persecution of the Jews and the abolition of everything that the tradition of Western civilization stands for, but also signified an open attack on Christendom, nobody expected serious resistance from the Evangelical Church; least of all did Adolf Hitler expect it. It was the general opinion in Germany and abroad that Protestantism was a declining force since theological Liberalism and Modernism had degraded it long ago to the level of a bourgeois association for the cultivation of some religious feelings and interest.

And yet—as a surprise to many observers in Germany and abroad—a vigorous will to resist became apparent in the Protestant Church, which had been considered dead. This resistance movement in the Evangelical Church became known to the world under the name of “Confessing Church”. We learn now, when the war is over, that this movement survived even the worst years; that it outlasted all the persecutions and that its spiritual leaders, such as Pastor Niemöller, Pastor Asmussen, Bishop Wurm, took over the leadership of the official Evangelical Church in Germany. These are the facts. The question arises, how could such resistance gain ground within a Church which seemed to be dying and how could it be successfully kept up for so many years of persecution? Did we perhaps underestimate the vitality of ancient traditions? Or was the conservative spirit indwelling in every Church tougher than was commonly thought? Surely all conservative forces were mobilized by the attack of National Socialism on the organization and doctrine of the Church. But it became clear very soon that this force would not have been sufficient by itself to stand up against the onslaught of pagan totalitarianism even for a few months.

The only satisfactory explanation of this power of resistance in the Evangelical Church (equally surprising for friends and opponents) is to be found in a fact too little noticed up to now: the great theological revival which had taken place in the years 1920 to 1933. This revival became known to the theologians first under the name “dialectical theology”, and Karl Barth, the Swiss professor of theology, can be regarded as its founder and pre-eminent

representative. Professor Barth, who rejects any kind of theological modernism (i.e. any *primarily* philosophical, historical or psychological interpretation of the Holy Scripture), prefers to call his theology—in a very modest and yet at the same time very confident manner—a “Theology of Revelation” or of the “Word of God”. (The name “theology of revelation” gradually replaced the former name of “dialectical theology” in Germany.)

Catholic theologians in Germany soon realized that the Catholic Church here confronted for the first time since the Reformation an impressive and genuinely theological interpretation both of the Scriptures and of traditional Christian teaching. They considered this theological movement so significant that they founded a new theological periodical *Catholica* with the special task of resuming the theological discussion, interrupted for some centuries, of this kind of evangelical theology. Consequently the subtitle of this magazine is *Zeitschrift für Kontroverstheologie*; it is edited by Fr. Grosche, S.J., in a peaceful and generous spirit. The public discussions of Professor Barth and Fr. Przywara, S.J., on the Catholic and the evangelical conception of the Church in 1925 evoked widespread attention. When Barth was teaching at the university in Bonn (1928–34) he and his disciples had regular discussions with the learned monks of Maria Laach, the Benedictine Abbey near Bonn. The subject of all these discussions—sometimes silently underlying and often openly declared—always was and still is the doctrine of *analogia entis* which Barth confronted with the Protestant doctrine of *analogia fidei*. The influence exercised by this new theology on the undergraduates in the years 1920–33 was extraordinarily strong. Almost unnoticed by the public, including even the ecclesiastical public, something like a revolution took place among the younger generation of the evangelical clergy. The young parsons began to preach quite unusual sermons. They carried a new spirit into the congregations. They were distinguished from the more or less liberal elder parsons by their deep veneration for the New and the Old Testament as the revealed word of God. Moreover, they distinguished themselves by a new understanding of the Church, of her authority and doctrine, of the Sacraments, confession and ecclesiastical discipline.

The fact was providential indeed that the seizure of power by the National Socialists and consequently the spreading of the German Christian heresy in the Evangelical Church synchronized with the growth of the new theology which was just about to conquer the Evangelical Church. Those “German Christians” rendered a priceless service to the younger generation of theologians by revealing in the most palpable way how far the

degeneration of the Evangelical Church had already proceeded and how badly this Church stood in need of a radical revival from the Word of God. What was the significance of that German Christian heresy? It was the political version of a heresy tolerated in the Evangelical Church for a long time that there could be other sources of God's revelation besides the word of God, that is to say human reason, religious feeling and moral consciousness of man. Now the only new element the "German Christians" had to add was that God would reveal Himself in a particular manner through *German* reason, *German* religious feeling and *German* moral consciousness. All this was summarized in the "call of God", which in the "historical hour of Germany" should become audible in the "German blood". Furthermore, it was a novelty that this kind of revelation should excel the biblical revelation, or, in other words, should claim "totality". Everything in Christian tradition had to submit to it. This means that if the "divine voice in history"—made audible through Hitler's mouth—and the "divine voice of the blood" were thus "the word of God number one" which was to be obeyed unconditionally, the Church, her organization and her doctrine had to adapt and to accommodate herself accordingly. This means in practice the introduction of the *Führerprinzip*, the leader principle, and the exclusion of non-Aryans from the Church; it means, furthermore, that Jesus had to be transformed into an Aryan hero, and finally that love of one's neighbour must be confined to love of one's fellow-German—of course provided he was Nazi-law-abiding.

(2) THE FIRST CLASHES

We shall understand the extraordinary success of the "German Christian Movement" from its beginning in the spring and summer of 1933 only if we realize that it was but the radical application of politics to "theological" ideas and ecclesiastical habits of old standing.

This success would never have been so far-reaching but that Government, party, police, press, broadcasting system and the entire propaganda machine supported the "German Christians". Both the latent "German Christian" tendency inside the Evangelical Church and political pressure from outside were co-operative in gaining for the "German Christians" 70-80 per cent of the votes in the ecclesiastical election in July 1933. It is true that on the eve of these elections Hitler himself broadcast a propaganda speech for the "German Christians". The outcome of these elections enabled them to occupy all the higher administrative posts in the Evangelical Church in Germany. Wherever an ecclesiastical official

refused voluntarily to resign, special officials "saw to it" that he was replaced. The Eastern Prussian army chaplain, Ludwig Müller, was selected by Hitler personally and appointed *Reichsbischof*. Hitler forced this appointment simply by threatening to arrest von Bodelschwingh, the candidate of the Church. Conscious of his unrestricted power, Müller installed in all provinces except Hanover, Württemberg and Bavaria "German Christian" Bishops, whose only qualification for their office was their fanatical adherence to the *Führer*. The Evangelical Youth Organization, comprising approximately eight hundred thousand boys and girls, was simply incorporated by Müller into the Hitler Youth and all people of Jewish extraction expelled from the Church. In his numerous declarations Müller thanked God for the salvation of Germany through the "God-sent *Führer*".

(3) THE OPPOSITION

Those few ecclesiastical dignitaries who had ventured some resistance were soon swept away by the "storm of revolution". The theological protests which they occasionally registered—though never failing to emphasize at the same time their loyalty to the new State—were lame and unimpressive. The various representatives of the clergy who were influenced by the new theology were not silent, but they were unknown men whose field of activity was limited and who could not achieve very much.

In June 1933, however, Professor Barth broke his silence and published a pamphlet under the title "*Theologische Existenz, Heute!*" ("Theological Existence, Today"), immediately dealing with the topical issues; this fact was of decisive importance for future developments. Barth emphasized the necessity that no one must "lose his theological existence", as he called it. As, in the neighbouring monastery of Maria Laach, the Divine Office of the Benedictine monks goes on continually and uninterruptedly, so likewise must the Evangelical Theology keep to its theological service. We have to judge the events of the National-Socialist Revolution as theologians, Barth went on, and not judge Evangelical Theology as National Socialist. The Church does not depend on changes of political or philosophical opinion, but, on the contrary, subjects all political and philosophical opinions to the only total authority of the Word of God. This appeal of Barth—written with *élan* and yet with sobriety—met with an unexpected echo throughout Germany. The pamphlet went into numerous editions. Reichspräsident von Hindenburg and Hitler received copies. The situation suddenly became clear, and in September 1933, when Pastor Niemöller called for the foundation of an Emergency League of

the Evangelical clergy, he met with a willing answer everywhere. At Christmas 1933 the League comprised 3000 pastors and at Christmas 1934 their number was 10,000 out of approximately 16,000 evangelical pastors in Germany.

The most important event in the history of the German Evangelical Church in 1933 was doubtless the famous mass demonstration of the "German Christians" in October in the *Sportpalast* in Berlin. In the presence of many "German Christian" Bishops the audience, numbering 20,000 people, carried a resolution, unanimous save for one solitary layman's vote, demanding the abolition of the Old Testament and radical measures of "Aryanization". This, however, was too much. Under the leadership of the pastors of the Emergency League storms of protests arose in the parishes. The *Reichsbischof* found himself compelled to declare in the press his disagreement with the "resolution of the 19,999", to dismiss some "German Christian" dignitaries and to proclaim "that the Bible and the faith of the fathers should remain untouched". But the facts could not be undone. Approximately 600,000 enrolled members of the "German Christian" movement withdrew and simultaneously the Emergency League received many applications for membership.

(4) THE DRAMATIC EVENTS OF 1934

At the beginning of this year a regulation appeared from the *Reichsbischof* threatening with immediate dismissal every pastor who publicly criticized measures of the Church authorities. The "German Christians" did not leave any doubt that criticism of the *Reichsbischof* was tantamount to criticism of the State or the *Führer*. These threats, however, only rallied the opposition. In Prussia, where people suffered most from this despotism, so-called "free synods" of parsons and laymen were established, appealing to the congregations for resistance. In particular "theses" or "confessions" of the ecclesiastical doctrines of Church and State were newly formulated with regard to modern development. The reformed Church (Calvinist tradition) on which Barth had the strongest influence was the first to publish declarations such as "We should be dumb dogs if we put down a reformed confession of our faith and remained silent about the total State. The State cannot seize and control the whole of man and cannot decide upon the form and message of the Church. If we know this, we must also confess it."

One single synod in Germany, that of Westphalia, where the "German Christians" had not gained the majority in 1933, refused to obey the order of the *Reichsbischof* to dissolve in March 1934. Hence this synod was forcibly dissolved by the Gestapo, with the

applause of its "German Christian" members. Before long, however, the majority gathered again in a church under the leadership of the courageous Pastor D. Koch; they celebrated communion and promised never to surrender the leadership of the Westphalian Provincial Church. The news of this energetic resistance spread quickly, and two days later a great mass meeting assembled in Dortmund in the so-called *Westfalenhall*, when 25,000 people solemnly professed their loyalty to their ecclesiastical leaders. On this occasion the name of "Bekennende Kirche" was used for the first time, showing that they were not merely concerned with a conservative loyalty to a tradition but with actualizing their confession on the day of battle. It is therefore better not to speak of a "Confessional" but of a "Confessing" Church.

People in Germany soon realized that it was necessary to resist. Thus the first great *Reichssynode* of the "Confessing Church" assembled in Barmen in May 1934. The significance of this synod is shown by three facts:

1. For the first time for centuries an authoritative decision concerning the doctrine of the Church was made.

2. Representatives of the Lutheran, the Reformed and the United Churches made this decision in full agreement.

3. In the so-called "theological declaration of Barmen" the theological presuppositions of the modernist Evangelical Church were explicitly condemned. The synod under the influence of the theological superiority of Karl Barth signified the full victory of the theology of revelation. To indicate the importance of this event we must emphasize that the newly organized Evangelical Church in 1945 recognized the decision of Barmen as binding upon the entire German Evangelical Church.

This declaration of Barmen contains six articles of which the first and second may be published here verbatim because of their lasting importance:

"With regard to the errors of the German Christians and the present ecclesiastical government of the German church which devastate the Church and disintegrate her unity we profess our faith in the following Evangelical truths:

1. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father, but by me" (John xiv, 6).

"Amen, amen I say to you: He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber. I am the door. By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John x, 1, 9).

"Jesus Christ as He is testified to us in the Holy Scripture, is the one Word of God that we have to listen to and to trust and obey in life and death.

"We reject the false teaching that the Church can and must acknowledge other events or powers, figures and truths as Divine Revelation apart from and beside this one Word of God."

Though it was by itself a most unusual fact that the Evangelical Church could afford authoritatively to pronounce a *docemus* and a *damnamus*, the contents were still more striking. If the character of revelation was denied to some "event" in Germany in 1934 it could mean only the event of the National-Socialist revolution. If there was talk of a "power" it was obviously of the mystical "power of blood". Everyone would refer the word "figure" to the *Führer*, and by truth obviously the "truth" of the National-Socialist *Weltanschauung* was meant.

The second article demonstrates, together with the totality of Divine Revelation in Christ, the totality of God's reign operative in Christ. It reads as follows:

2. "Jesus Christ is made of God unto us, wisdom, and justice, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. i, 30).

"As Jesus Christ is God's promise of the remission of all our sins, so He is also in the same way God's claim of our entire life; through Him we receive liberation from the godless bondage of this world to a free thankful service of His creatures. We reject the false teaching as if there were areas of our life within which we would not be Christ's but belong to another Lord, areas where we would not need the justification and sanctification through Him."

The second article dealt directly with the opinion rampant within the Church and outside it that one could be politically a supporter of the new State while at the same time its opponent so far as ecclesiastical policy was concerned. We shall have to demonstrate later what far-reaching consequences are implied in the doctrine that every sphere of human life is subject to the reign of Christ. The other four articles dealt with the Church, ecclesiastical government, the State and the mission of the Church in the world.

It would be mistaken to assume that the majority of the pastors and parishioners had already realized the truly "revolutionary" significance of the declaration of Barmen. Even today many people who refer to "Barmen" may still think or act in opposition to what had to be done according to Barmen. But still the decision was definitely made and it will gradually gather momentum.

The increasing strength and unity of the opposition as was manifest by the *Reichssynode* shocked the men in Berlin. They hastened to carry their schemes for a uniform co-ordination of the Evangelical Church into practice before it would be too late.

Subsequently the churches of Hanover, Württemberg and Bavaria, not yet uniform, were put under the control of a commissariat. The Bishops of Württemberg and Bavaria were kept under arrest in their homes by the Gestapo. This procedure provoked stormy indignation among the loyal congregations. In München, Stuttgart, Augsburg and Nüremberg public demonstration took place at which many thousands of people gathered. Gauleiter Streicher and the Bavarian provincial government sent alarming reports to Berlin. There the second *Reichssynode* had assembled meanwhile in the suburb of Dahlem. It proclaimed an ecclesiastical state of emergency, deposed the *Reichsbischof* and formally excommunicated him and his underlings in the following words: "Those men who usurped the leadership in the Reich and the provinces have detached themselves from the Christian Church." At the same time the synod, by virtue of the state of emergency, appointed new men to the leadership of the Church. We must bear in mind that they decided the deposition of the trustee of the *Führer* without even asking the *Führer*. The synod was simply satisfied with informing the Government of what they had done. "We forward this our declaration to the Government and ask it to take notice of this decision and demand the acknowledgment of the fact that in ecclesiastical matters and questions of doctrine and order the Church alone is competent to judge and to decide, though without prejudice to the right of supervision of the State."

This was a language unheard of in the Third Reich. And it happened only a few months after the dreadful slaughter of 30 June (Röhm affair), when Germany was still paralysed with horror and trembled before the Dictator. But there was no 30 June for the Church, though the *Reichsbischof* had not hesitated to threaten it shortly before. In the alternative, either to take up an open fight against the Evangelical Church or to show himself conciliatory, Hitler chose the latter with an eye on the forthcoming plebiscite in the Saar. The responsible "German Christian" officials were dismissed and the arrested Bishops of the opposition were invited to a personal interview with Hitler in Berlin. The *Führer* declared that they were legally re-installed in their offices and that the State and the party would show themselves neutral in ecclesiastical affairs in future. *Reichsbischof* Müller fell into disgrace and was compelled to withdraw most of his own regulations. From then onwards Müller spent his life as a shadow Bishop and later disappeared. Forgotten completely in public life, he committed suicide in 1944.

The Church had thus acted because she was bound to do so for the sake of God's will. It did not lead her to final destruction as so many anxious people had feared, but to a full success. When,

on 31 October, on occasion of the feast of Reformation, the congregations were told of the "message of Dahlem", there were no halls big enough in the cities of Germany for the masses which assembled. The congregations, deeply moved, listened to their new ecclesiastical leaders and showed their will to recognize them in future as the leaders of the Evangelical Church in Germany.

(5) THE TIME OF COMPROMISE

Hitler had given some hints in his interview with the Bishops that he would readily accept one of them as Müller's successor. The Bishops and the Churches represented by them felt greatly released by this conciliatory attitude of the *Führer*. They had agreed with the radical decisions of Dahlem only with great reluctance, and had made up their minds not to infuriate Hitler any further. Hence they entered the path of compromise and found the support of many others in this kind of policy. Thus the decisions of Barmen were carried out only reluctantly, and the "German Christian" dignitaries, who were fully backed as ever by the authorities of the State, were eventually able to retain their leading positions in general after the dismissal of only a few of their functionaries. In order to take up the fight once more the Prussian synod made a new attack in March 1935 by condemning Alfred Rosenberg's neo-paganism publicly from the pulpits. The declaration began with the words: "We see our people threatened by a deadly danger." Though this step provoked a strong reaction from the authorities when 900 Prussian pastors were arrested and kept under arrest for a few days, the entire affair eventually proved a merely ephemeral incident. Neither State nor Church was willing to proceed any further in the controversy. In June 1935 a third *Reichssynode* was arranged. Karl Barth, however, could not attend the assembly, since he had returned to Switzerland. He had refused to take the oath of allegiance to Hitler as a civil servant and so had been dismissed from the university. The synod was therefore wholly under the influence of the conciliatory Bishops of Hanover, Württemberg and Bavaria and yielded no significant results.

(6) THE MINISTRY OF CHURCH AND THE ECCLESIASTICAL BOARD (KIRCHENAUSSCHÜSSE)

The establishment of a new "Reich-Ministry of ecclesiastical affairs" in July 1935 came as a great surprise. Its head was the Reichskirchen-Minister Kerl. At first this new ministry did not show any conspicuous signs of activity. It was not until the beginning of October that the new minister—without even mentioning the Reichsbischof Müller—convoked a number of elderly eccle-

siastical dignitaries to a so-called *Reichskirchenausschuss* (an ecclesiastical administrative board for the Reich) and entrusted this assembly with the administration of the entire Evangelical Church in Germany. He hoped in this way to meet the argument of the "Confessing Church" that only churchmen are competent to rule the Church. The militant elements of the "Confessing Church", such as Niemöller and his friends, refused to acknowledge this new board as well as the Ministry, since their authority was derived from the State and not from the Church. The conciliatory Bishops, favouring a compromise, declared themselves ready for a "conditional collaboration".

(7) NEW VICTORY OF THE "RADICALS"

This antagonism of opinions within the "Confessing Church" seemed to lead towards a schism. In order to clear the situation a fourth *Reichssynode* was convoked which assembled in Bad Oeyenhausen in February 1936. After heavy disputes the "militant group" carried the day and the Bishops resigned from the administration of the Church as a whole. A "provisional administration of the German Evangelical Church" was established, composed only of men whose object was to carry out the decisions of Barmen and Dahlem, (hence this group of the "Confessing Church" is called *Barmer* or *Dahlemer Richtung*). It was, however, only to a very limited extent possible to carry into practice the decisions of Barmen. Too much precious time had been lost and the "German Christians", supported by the State, had succeeded in strengthening their position, though it had been badly shaken in 1934. But still it was of decisive importance that the education of the young theologians (including their examinations and ordination) remained under the control of the "Confessing Church". She could also maintain an effective control of the money collections in the parishes. The most important act of the new administration of the Church was a detailed memorandum which they presented to Hitler explicitly dealing for the first time with political issues. They protested against the persecution of the Jews, the concentration camps, the insecurity of law and jurisdiction, the falsification of election results, etc. This important step was taken in accordance with the second point of the declaration of Barmen, which proclaimed the totality of Christ's reign over all districts of human life. The memorandum was presented to Hitler with the notification that "the Church would feel herself compelled to consider further steps" unless she received a reply within six weeks' time. Hitler remained silent. After six weeks had passed the full text was published in foreign papers. (This was done on the personal initia-

tive of a single man who paid for it with his life.) A few weeks later a shortened version of the memorandum was published from the pulpits in approximately ten thousand parishes all over Germany. But still nothing happened. Once more this bold act was met by Hitler with a withdrawal. In the beginning of 1937 the whole of the Nazi press in huge headlines announced a big change of the Church policy in the Third Reich. The headlines read: "Hitler grants freedom to the Evangelical Church." The ecclesiastical administration boards were dissolved, since "they had shown themselves incapable of re-establishing order and peace in the Evangelical Church". Free Church elections were promised which should revise the elections of 1933, but soon it was revealed that the Government intended to arrange and supervise the elections themselves. Hence the "Confessing Church" refused to participate in these elections, following the principle that the Church must be independent in arranging her own matters. The elections never took place.

During all these years the secret police, the party and the Nazi ecclesiastical authorities did not cease to take measures here and there against parsons or laymen in parishes all over Germany. In Prussia not less than 1500 parsons, mostly of the younger generation, were suspended from office. The living of these men was maintained only by voluntary collections (which, of course, were illegal). Besides this some hundred parsons were kept in custody for longer or shorter time and a few of them were also in concentration camps. In 1938 a larger number of parsons was prosecuted when they had as civil servants to take the oath of allegiance to Hitler. Many parsons refused, pointing out that their vows make it a matter of course that they would "give unto Caesar what is Caesar's". This, they maintained, should suffice. The whole issue eventually remained undecided, as practically everything did in this struggle from 1933 to 1945. The last event that aroused sensation all over Germany was the circulation of a leaflet "Prayer for Peace", which the provisional administration published in those unfortunate days of Munich. The provisional administration was accused of high treason by the Nazi press for the following sentence in this leaflet: "O Lord, we confess unto Thee the sins of our people. Thy name is blasphemed, Thy Word is opposed, Thy truth is suppressed. Much wrong has been done openly and secretly; life has been injured and destroyed, property robbed and the honour of our land is injured. O Lord, our God, we confess our sins and the sins of our people. Forgive us and have mercy on us." And another sentence read: "We remember all who are in danger of cruel vengeance and hatred. We remember all peoples whose country is menaced by war and we pray for

them unto Thee our God." This prayer was in fact never prayed, since the news of the agreement of Munich became known in the last moment. Under the impression of the attacks in the party press that a section of the "Confessing Church" which was always ready to compromise, particularly the Bishops mentioned above, hastened to emphasize in a declaration published in the press that they never could agree with the leaflet for "religious and patriotic reasons". This public discrimination was a heavy blow to the "Confessing Church" whose unity had been shaken already.

(8) THE YEARS OF THE WAR

War provided the Nazis with an opportunity of getting rid of the opposition pastors by calling them up for the army. The organization of the "Confessing Church" gradually disintegrated in this way. Synods could no longer be convoked, paper supply was denied for theological writings or periodicals, and ecclesiastical buildings were requisitioned for military purposes. Thus the "Confessing Church" largely became a silent Church. Only Bishop Wurm courageously raised his voice as the spokesman of the "Confessing Church" in the years 1942-45. (While gravely ill he had realized that any compromise was become impossible.) Gradually the "Confessing Church" faded from public life. So far as her members were still in Germany at all, they went more and more "underground". In this connection it is very significant that some theologians of the "Confessing Church" had their share in the preparations for the plot against Hitler of 20 July, 1944. The Bishop of Chichester recently published some interesting details about this fact in the *Contemporary Review*. Hence it was revealed that Dietrich Bonhöffer, a pastor of the "Confessing Church", had informed the Bishop in a secret interview in Stockholm as early as May 1942 about the programme of the new revolutionary German Government and had handed him over an almost complete list of the men concerned with the plot against Hitler, in order to forward it to the British Government. Bonhöffer and a number of other leaders of the "Confessing Church" parsons as well as laymen were murdered in 1945 in different concentration camps.

(9) PROSPECTS

When the war had ended the surviving leaders of the "Confessing Church" assembled at a meeting in the little town of Treysa, in Hessen. A board of twelve members was established as *Rat der evangelischen Kirchen Deutschlands*, of whom seven had belonged to the former "militant" section of the "Confessing Church".

Bishop Wurm is the president and Niemöller his deputy. A new constitution of the Church is being prepared.

This *Rat der evangelischen Kirchen Deutschlands*, acting on behalf of the Evangelical Church and the people of Germany, made a confession of their guilt to the representatives of the oecumenic World Council of Churches in October 1945. This confession is the subject of lively discussions all over Germany at present. The same men who have been all in favour of compromises with the Nazis in the Third Reich—and consequently are the most guilty men—now champion the opinion that such confession can be made only to God but not to men. Niemöller and his friends, on the other hand, insist that an honest confession of guilt must be made also to other nations, since neither the Evangelical Church nor the German people as a whole did in fact protest sufficiently against all the wrong inflicted upon other peoples. This declaration of the German Evangelical Church made it in fact much easier for the provisional World Council of Churches to receive the German Church as a member on an equal footing at its first assembly after the war in Geneva in February 1946. (The representatives of the German Evangelical Churches were Bishop Wurm and Pastor Niemöller.)

The controversies between the "section of Dahlem" and the "compromisers" are by no means settled. On the whole, however, it can be said that the former resistance movement is gradually becoming a movement of renewal and keeps up the leadership of the Church. The "German Christians" lost all their posts and their influence. The tendency towards a theology of Revelation is now general and consequently two changes may be expected: (1) A number of important reforms within the Churches (according to point one of the declaration of Barmen). (2) An increase of understanding of the political responsibility of the Church, of her mission in the social problems and an improvement of her relation to the working class (according to point 2 of the declaration of Barmen).

The relation of the Evangelical Churches to the Catholic Church is characterized through the persecution to which all the Churches were equally exposed. These common persecutions helped them to continue the theological discussions which began in 1933 in a very practical way. Many clergymen and laymen of both denominations spent much time together in the prisons of the Gestapo or in concentration camps. They had long talks together about the needs of the Churches and often prayed for this intention. Nobody can know what bearing those communal experiences of many individual men may have on the future relationship of the two Churches. In any case, the mutual aid

given by both Churches to each other in the time of distress is continued now by practical collaboration in various fields. The movement of the so-called "left-wing Catholics" seems of considerable significance, and by its spirit and ideas shows some affinity to the spirit of the "Confessing Church". It may be that just these Catholics are called upon to deepen the understanding between the two Churches.

PASTOR WERNER KOCH.

THE above article, written while Pastor Koch was a prisoner of war in this country, was the first systematic account of the "Confessing" Church written after the war. No reader of THE DUBLIN is in danger of mistaking its theological outlook for that which THE DUBLIN represents. One compensation of the gross mishandling of Europe by Britain and America since the war is that Christendom stands out more clearly contrasted against the materialism of the "powers". As against the Nazis, so against their successors, the Christian, Catholic or Protestant, stands for the majesty of the human person and for the sovereignty of God. The theological movement in the Protestant Churches in Germany inspired many Protestant clergy and laity to resist the last drift of liberalism into disaster. Whether it will prove something more permanent than a "movement", and a "resistance" will depend on whether it can transcend the ancient Protestant error that Grace and Nature are eternally opposed; for it was through the irreconcilable conflict between the Creator and His fallen creation, and the implication that faith has no part in reason or reason no fellowship with faith, that post-Christian Europe surrendered the things of this world to the policies of materialism and despair. Now that the consequence of this dualism has been clearly revealed, many Protestant leaders in Germany are emphasizing the practical and political responsibilities of Christians, and the Conference at Treysa made a confession of war-guilt which deserved and evoked the admiration of all the Protestants in the world. But the question runs deeper than war-guilt. Even in expounding this great religious act of humility, Dr. Asmussen, Chancellor of the Evangelical Church, quoted Luther's description of reason as a 'whore'. Pastor Koch approaches this Lutheran dualism when he refers to the "heresy long tolerated in the Evangelical Church that there could be other sources of God's revelation beside the word of God, that is to say human reason, religious feeling and moral consciousness of man" and that "the only new element the 'German Christians' had to add was that God would reveal Himself in a particular manner through German reason". The real heresy was the notion that there is such a thing as German reason or German Christianity. While it is true that God

is the only source of divine revelation, it is equally true that He is the only source of human reason. In Germany, as in France, there are signs of a general revolt against "intellectualism" and a distrust of "natural" reason, a revolt which is itself a natural reaction to the catastrophe. It recalls the scepticism which in the fifteenth century had eaten so far into Christendom that European civilization fell to pieces under pressure of an unholy alliance of piety and power politics. There was no lack in those days of mystical fervour: it lent wings to the flight from reason, and discovered an impassable distance between the Kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world: it used the Christian theology of redemption for the abolition of Man. If there is to be any future for Europe or hope for the survival of men and their communities on earth, the double heresy of these five centuries must be quenched and forgotten which set the word of God and the mind of man in perpetual enmity as though Christ had come not to fulfil but to destroy. "The word was God. All things were made by Him and without Him was not one thing made that was made." The mind of man though fallen to the invention of concentration camps and atomic bombs still bears the signature of its Author: if it were not so, there would be no valid confession of guilt or indeed any guilt at all. There can be no war criminal in an apostate Europe. The secularism of the Western Democracies has found it profitable to join the anti-Christian autocracy of "all the Russias" in wasting all that the war had left alive in Europe, and spends its ingenuity upon the all-important question whether a village schoolmaster here and a bank clerk there can be strictly said to have been a real Nazi. That is the level at which British and American reason crawls after its British and American ends. But reason is not British or American any more than German. "Nothing stands firm with regard to the practical reason unless it be directed to the last end which is the common good: and whatever stands to reason in this sense is the nature of a law." The supernaturalism which piously denounces and rejects "all that stands to reason in this sense" has no answer for the secularism that ignores it. Both are at this moment more fascinated by the dead causes of 1943 than by the living and starving humanity of 1946, and while they dispute as to whether the adversary should be called Hitler or Satan or some longer name devised by a school of economics, the real adversary who knows no law takes hold of mankind by the spontaneous infection of nihilism. "You are always talking to me of principles," said the Tsar Alexander I to Talleyrand. "As if your public law were anything to me. I do not know what it means." His words mark the real frontier of Europe. Not that Talleyrand served loftier principles than the imperial evangelist who desired to establish the peace of the world "according to the sublime principles of Christ our Saviour". But Talleyrand understood the meaning of law. The Russian autocrat, then as now, did not. No Russian government since Ivan the Terrible has ever been aware of the "practical reason", the "last end" or the "common good": no

European government has been able to govern for a generation in open defiance of these principles. It is not a question whether God will be just and merciful. The justice and mercy that are in doubt are human: it is precisely the "moral consciousness of man" that no man, above all no Christian man, dare despise, howsoever unregenerate or infidel that moral consciousness may be. For better or worse, the moral consciousness is the lever by which truth or error will raise man to his true end or degrade him to the waste and void. If the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, then the "flesh" and the "we" were accounted fit recipients of the unspeakable gift by an accountancy which, even for mercy's sake cannot lie, but is the Truth Himself.—EDITOR.

FOUR SONNETS BY REINHOLD SCHNEIDER

(from *Die Letzten Tage*, published Im Verlag Der Arche Zuerich 1945)

AN EINEN PRIESTER DESSEN KIRCHE VOELLIC ZERSTOERT WURDE

DU bist der Tempel, seit der Tempel schwand,
Du bist das Licht, seit uns kein Licht mehr scheint,
Du bist der Ort, der die Gemeinde eint,
Der Beter Turm im tuermelosen Land.

Du bist des Reiches kuehner Widerstand,
Tief in der Welt, das diese Welt nicht meint,
Mit allem Jammer, der auf Erden weint,
Huehlt sich der Koenig selbst in Dein Gewand.

So flieszen Deine Spuren in die Seinen,
Du bist der Aufgang, der nicht sinken kann,
Der Zeit erwacht zu strahlendem Beginn.

Erbebe nicht mehr vor dem Ungemeinen
Und blicke fromm die letzten Greuel an:
Gott leidet mit, Du schwindest zu ihm hin.

ADVENT 1944

Tut Busze, betet, schweigt! Ehrt Eure Toten,
Die Eure Schuld gefaellt. Fragt Gott nicht, fragt
Das eigne Herz, das bitter Euch verklagt
und seid bereit, denn Ihr auch seid entboten!

Verwirkt ist alles. Wo die Braende lohten,
Steht neu das Zeichen, dem Ihr widersagt;
So lernt es fuerchten, ehe Ihr verzagt,
Mehr als die Schrecken alle, die Euch drohten.

Auf jedem Lager kruemmt sich Eure Schuld
Und unter Truemmern klagt sie an, vergraben;
Auf kahler Erde, ohne Hemd und Schrein.

Hoch waltet Gottes strafende Geduld,
Zu baun aus denen, die entheiligt haben.
Ihr sollt des Tempels heilige Steine sein.

Allein den Betern kann es noch gelingen,
Das Schwert ob unsern Haeuptern aufzuhalten,
Und diese Welt den richtenden Gewalten
Durch ein geheiligt Leben abzuringen;

Denn Taeter werden nie den Himmel zwingen:
Was sie vereinen, wird sich wieder spalten,
Was sie erneuern, ueber Nacht veralten,
Und was sie stiften, Not und Unheil bringen.

Jetzt ist die Zeit, da sich das Heil verbirgt
Und Menschen-Hochmut auf dem Markte feiert,
Indes im Dom die Beter sich verhuellen,

Bis Gott aus unsern Opfern Segen wirkt
Und in den Tiefen, die kein Aug' entschleiert,
Die trocknen Brunnen sich mit Leben füllen.

Jetzt ist des Heiligen Zeit. Im Streite bricht
Des Helden Schwert, and die nach Zeichen fragen,
Sie sehen immer fremde Sterne tagen
Und ueberlisten die Gewalten nicht.

Mein Haupt erstrahlt und keine Stimme spricht,
Die Maechtigen faszt ein Grauen und Sieger zagen,
Es kehren aus den Graebnern die erschlagen,
Und alle werden allen zum Gericht.

Der ist am staerkesten, der den Feirden hat.
Wo sich die Maechte gnadenlos bestritten,
Da wird zur Macht ein gluehendes Erbarmen,

Bis Gottes Heiliger an verfluchter Statt
Die Seele losringt, die den Feind erlitten,
Und Feind und Welt laeszt ruh'n in seinen Armen.

Translated by J. B. LEISHMAN

TO A PRIEST

WHOSE CHURCH HAD BEEN ENTIRELY DESTROYED

You are the temple where no temples stand,
You are the light where light has ceased to be,
You are the place uniting two or three,
The tower of prayer in a towerless land,

You are the Kingdom's ultimate resistance,
Deep in the world this world no longer heeds;
With all the wounds from which the whole earth bleeds
The King himself exists in your existence.

Your features thus are fading into His.
You are the dawning which can never dim,
At time's resplendent origin elected.

Tremble no more before the mysteries,
And view the final horrors undejected:
• God suffers too, you vanish into him.

ADVENT 1944

Repent, pray, speak not! Mourn you dead, who fell
Through your own guilt. Ask not of God, but ask
Of your own hearts which take you all to task,
And be prepared, for you are called as well!

All has been forfeited! Where fires blazed
That sign resurges which you all denied:
Learn, then, to fear it, before hope has died,
More than all other terrors that amazed.

On all repose your gnawing guilt descends.
From ruins it accuses, immolated
With shroudless corpses and uncoffined bones.

But God's avenging patience condescends
To build from those that have deconsecrated,
And you shall be his temple's sacred stones.

Only the men of prayer in these last hours
Can save our heads from the suspended sword,
And through a life renewed in Christ our Lord
Redeem this world from the avenging powers.

For men of action never conquer Heaven:
What they unite will split again in two,
One night will antique what they renew,
And all their order be at six and seven.

These are the days when holiness must wait,
While in the market human pride entices,
And men of prayer in churches hide from strife,

Till God make blessings of our sacrifices,
And in those depths no eye can penetrate
The dried-up fountains fill again with life.

The saint prevails. The hero's sword is shattered
In battle. Those that ask for signs perceive
Star upon star ascending to deceive,
And still the powers of darkness are unscattered.

No brow illustrious, no commanding call.
The mighty shudder and the victors tremble.
Out of their graves the slaughtered re-assemble,
And all men sit in judgement upon all.

The man at peace is now the mightiest.
Where powers so pitilessly were contended
The power of pity shall be manifest,

Till God's saint in that place unsanctified
Shall free the spirit which the foe offended,
And foe and all within his arms abide.

TWO POEMS BY WERNER BERGENGRUEN

(from *Dies Irae*, published *Im Verlag der Arche Zuerich* 1945)

DIE LETZTE EPIPHANIE

Ich hatte dies Land in mein Hers genommen,
Ich habe ihm Boten um Boten gesandt.
In vielen Gestalten bin ich gekommen.
Ihr aber habt mich in keiner erkannt.

Ich klopfte bei Nacht, ein bleicher Hebraeer,
ein Fluechtling, gejagt, mit zerrissenen Schuh.
Ihr riefet dem Schergen, ihr winktet dem Spaecher
und meintet noch Gott einen Dienst zu tun.

Ich kam als zitternde geistesgeschwaechte
Greisin mit stummem Angstgeschrei.
Ihr aber sprachet vom Zukunftsgeschlechte
und nur meine Asche gabt ihr frei.

Verwaister Knabe auf oestlichen Flaechen,
ich fiel euch zu Fueszen und flehte um Brot.
Ihr aber scheutet ein kuenftiges Raechen,
ihr zucket die Achseln und gabt mir den Tod.

Ich kam als Gefangner, als Tagelohner,
verschleppt und verkauft, von der Peitsche zerfetzt.
Ihr wandtet den Blick von dem struppigen Froener.
Nun komm ich als Richter. Erkennt ihr mich jetzt?

DIE SUEHNE

Wieviel Zeiten wird es wahren,
bis der duerre Stecken gruent,
bis die Truemmer sich verklaeren
und das letzte Blut gesuehnt?

Doch wir suchnen nicht in Zeiten,
nicht auf diesem blinden Stern.
Es geschieht in Ewigkeiten
und vorm Angesicht des Herrn.

Aber ihm und seinen Scharen
ist die Zeit ein Fluegelschlag,
ist ein Tag gleich tausend Jahren,
tausend Jahre sind ein Tag.

Einmal stehen wir geblendet
ploetzlich und gewahren ihn.
Und vielleicht ist laengst vollendet,
was uns kaum begonnen schien.

Translated by J. B. LEISHMAN

THE LAST EPIPHANY

I had taken this land to my heart and my bosom,
Herald on herald I sent in my name.
In many a shape I have tarried among you,
But you never knew me however I came.

I knocked at your doors in the night, a pale Hebrew,
a fugitive, hunted, unshaved and unshod:
You called the S S man, you phoned the Gestapo,
and thought you were doing a service to God.

I came as a quivering, grey-headed woman,
weak-witted, with only a terrified cry:
You spoke of a purified race, and to kinsmen
a parcel of ashes was all your reply.

A parentless boy on the eastern expanses,
I fell at your feet and implored you for bread:
You shuddered with fear of a future avengement,
and left me to hunger until I was dead.

I came as a prisoner, a lash-driven worker,
a chattel of those in whose hands I was cast:
You averted your gaze from that verminous scarecrow.
I come now as judge—do you know me at last?

THE ATONEMENT

How much time must be endured
till the barren staff be green,
till the ruins rise transfigured,
and the guilty souls be cleaned?

Never time for such atonement
can this fading star afford:
timelessly we must attempt it,
in the presence of the Lord.

He, though, and his hosts behold in
time's beginning time's decay;
one day seems a thousand years,
and a thousand years a day.

Suddenly our dazzled vision
gazes on the Three-in-One.
And, it may be, all is finished
we had thought was scarce begun.

Translated by J. B. LEISHMAN.

THE UNITY OF HISTORY*

By THEODOR HAECKER

FOR the Christian, history is primarily universal history. The physicists have long given up talking of "closed systems". Everything depends on everything else; the last grain of earth in the poorest field has its share in the history of the sun, the moon and the numberless stars. The last man that still is a man belongs to the history of mankind.

Nothing can be clearer than the universality of history, for being itself is universal and history is based upon being; there is no "history of the Nothing". It is true that there is particular history, but this adjective itself presupposes universal history. By virtue of Revelation the Christian can to some extent clear his mind about the meaning of universal history; it is the return of the creature to God. At the same time he feels an anxious obscurity about the particular meaning of the history of nations. Their proceedings (and we may use this word in its legal sense) will only reveal their true meaning in their dramatic development—and indeed only in the final scene of that—though it may become dimly visible in some vague presage, in a poetic vision or intuition.

Such is history: its created actors do not know the outcome. This fact distinguishes them sharply from the actors in man-made tragedies. They are forming and being formed at the same time; and we must not forget that they are audience, too. They are onlookers too—a noble privilege, which like every privilege can easily lead to abuse and sin if the unity of the whole is violated. Without this privilege man is degraded to the so-called "man of action" who ranks lower than the animal; for even in the animal there is a mysterious kind of analogy to "onlooking" in its passivity towards what happens to it. The "onlooking" of man, man's contemplation not only of what he *suffers* but also of what he *does* in the freedom of his will, is as it were an active passivity, an anticipation of spiritual life, a blissful affirmation of the creative play of wisdom for the sake of love. To forget or to scorn the gift of looking and onlooking amid the whirl of events—nay even of his own wilful actions—leads man into confusion of principles. Certainly power always springs from power and never from weakness; this is metaphysically self-evident. But the paradox in Man, rooted in the original act of the Creation, is that man, by nature weak, receives the more

* This essay is part of a booklet, *Vom abendländischen Menschen*, which was published by "Alsatia Verlag", Colmar, Alsace, in 1943, as a kind of anthology of Haecker's works.

strength the less he trusts in the power which seems his possession but is only a loan, the more he realizes his essential weakness and opens himself to the power of God; for God's power is in fact the only real power because it alone is *a se*. It is part of the darkest mystery of man that he can be blinded to this shining truth and so come to define his being, and consequently his power (for power springs from being) as if he were God himself. But if man opens himself to the power of God and co-operates with it, he finds this looking and onlooking, this contemplation of external events and of his own works as an eternal wealth in temporal poverty. The sacred books of the Christian, particularly the Psalms, offer an abundance of this bliss in the heart of misery. Only if history is realized as primarily universal will it do justice to the nobility in man which is rooted in his nature.

But the converse is also true; since this nobility is inherent in man, the meaning of history cannot but be universal. For even on the plane of sense perception contemplation is the sense of unity and wholeness, whereas man's *acting* is *always* particular.

This plural history within universal history has its grandeur. The nations have been granted powers and potentialities which they may use of their *own choice* for good or evil. They may range as the Psalmist says, up to the insurmountable limits of the word of God to the *flammaria moenia mundi* themselves.

The history of nations is colourful as a poster, as noisy as public opinion; but there is a deeper history, gentler and more veiled.

History is *universal* in a transcendental sense, for the Triune Almighty God is its Lord, Who is inviolable unity; and it is *plural* according to the inexhaustible richness of the uncreated Divine essence, which He has imparted in a finite and manifold manner to His image and likeness; for He has willed and created the freedom of His creature. And finally history is, at its heart, *personal*.

The person is the supreme being, the supreme good in this created world, but at the same time a hidden being. No wonder that the real history, in which the ultimate meaning of all history is implied—the history of persons—is also a hidden history. All history is the story of the way towards Salvation or away from it, the way towards God or apostasy from God. The supreme created being, the supreme created good is the person, and for this reason its history is richer than any other; it secretly strikes the keynote to the music of all history. In this history of persons is the heart and ultimate light whose rays illumine every history and all histories. Thus the story of persons on their way to Salvation transcends not only the history of the vast physical world, of the realm of plants and animals, but also the noisy cross-roads of all history, the *historia communis* which is the political history of races, nations and empires,

and moreover even the more intimate and mysterious history of any particular family. Every history is for the sake of the single holy soul; the rise and decline of empires, wars, revolutions are for the service of this history. Universal history as well as plural history cuts across the history of every individual person; for it is written: "In that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left." (Luke xvii, 34.) This awful sentence presupposes a deeper history, the history of the person in its ultimate depth. It is ordained that every event and all events shall be in an *absolute* sense for the glory of God, but on the plane of the created being for the Salvation of the person who shall see God face to face. Everything that happens is for the service of this end, and every sacrifice is justified by this end. Even the fate of entire nations in peace or war is subordinate to the Salvation of the persons whose community is the Kingdom of God. The person is the guarantor of the unity of the whole of mankind; for the person is above all the races and nations of history and pre-history. Indeed these terms are part of a mere secondary analysis of our consciousness, only necessary because whatever exists in time is or has history.

This history of the Salvation of persons reveals the incomparable status of Man in the Creation, since history reaches in it the fullness of its becoming and its meaning. Whether man falls or rises, he needs someone to lead or mislead him. The evil which he commits is not accomplished without the temptation and scornful help of the fallen angel; and the good which he does is not done without the guidance of God and His holy angels by helping Grace. Man's responsibility is there in all its reality, but it is mitigated by the weakness proper to him as a creature; his responsibility is not at first immediate. Man did not, does not, will not fall without temptation. But who tempted Satan? *Mysterium iniquitatis!* "Lead us not into temptation"—through whom? Only the devil can tempt; God cannot. When man has fallen by the submission to the tempter (and this is his freedom and his *responsibility*), he does not rise by the strength that is directly his own, but only by following the guidance of Grace, and in this lies his freedom and his *merit*. And yet there is a great difference between the two movements: man is made to fall because he falls; but he rises because he is lifted up. Wheresoever a man succeeds in his evil deeds—that is to say on a large scale and with perseverance until the insurmountable limit is reached—it is always through a pact with the power of evil. (This is a metaphor, no doubt, as when one says that someone "sold his soul", but there is no better and more generally intelligible image for the undoubted spiritual fact.) This man himself is well aware of this fact; he may indeed try to suppress his knowledge and so bring about serious hysteria and eventually even lunacy. But when a man succeeds in good on a

large scale and perseveres without ever reaching a limit (this is one of the distinctions of good and evil that the one has inviolable limits while the other is limitless) he never does so without guidance and without living grace. This too is known to the man himself though he may reach moral autonomy (and there is no other way to achieve it). He may even achieve a higher life, the overflowing freedom of "*ama et fac quod vis*", and this can still less be reached by any way but this. This story of the human person is not written down, but it is indeed history, nay it is the very heart of history. One locks it up, either dumb or protesting in the darkness of despair; another lets it shine forth in the bliss of his praise of God.

This history of the Salvation of persons is indifferent to all that we call culture, civilization or barbarism of men. No doubt man is designed by nature to possess culture and civilization; this belongs to his progressive character, without which he could not be man at all. But his history must have had its beginning; and man at the beginning of his history is just as much man as in the end. In this, his primal and ultimate essence, there is neither development nor progress. Adam had no culture or civilization; he wore no garment but that of his innocence and of the mystery of God. But he too would have produced culture and practised arts, though in a manner different from that of the fallen man. A French historian and philosopher rightly denies that our pre-history and excavations give the lie to the Scriptures and their account of facts, for what do these excavations testify, except that the first men were clothed in the skins of animals and had only primitive tools? Do the Scriptures tell us anything else, though they were written in later ages by men who no longer wore skins but the precious vestments of an elaborate oriental civilization? What, in fact, does pre-history show except that man has a progressive nature and had the gift of the arts from the very beginning? There are drawings of cave-men which reveal the essence of art and human genius much more profoundly than many contemporary works of art; and surely far fewer crimes were committed then against the spirit of language than in Europe today in the age of press, propaganda and broadcasting? No doubt Neanderthal man did not look like Belvedere Apollo, but he too was a spiritual person whose Salvation mattered. Some of those Neanderthal men, who before the Incarnation obeyed, as far as in them lay, the direct commands of God, will on the Last Day of history and of Judgement rise up transfigured against certain highly cultivated and civilized enemies of God. Cain and Abel were no Arcadian shepherds, nor did they know anything of machinery, but the one obeyed God and the other did not, the one observed the supreme law of love towards God and his neighbour, and the other did not. And in this lies the final meaning of history, compared with which

everything else is indifferent in the strict sense of the word. This final *ordo* of history as the history of Salvation excels as perfectly sovereign and absolute every other *ordo* of history. But we must not suppose that this natural order in virtue of which man possesses his progressive character is a matter of indifference to the supreme order of Salvation, for man is created in this natural order by God and without it would not be man at all. He would not be either an object or a subject for the history of Salvation. He fell with this order and in it. He was redeemed with it and in it by the Incarnation of God, by Christ's death and Resurrection. But the status of one's family, for instance, is indifferent to the supernatural order; whether one is man, woman, or child, whether 'bond or free, rich or poor, Greek or barbarian or at any other stage of culture—all this is irrelevant, for the wall of partition is broken down. It is not the history of families, nor of races and nations, nor of cultures that holds within itself the final meaning of history, but only the history of the Salvation of persons in the Kingdom of God. The Salvation of families, the welfare of peoples and nations, the fullness and wealth of cultures are doubtless finite ends of man in this realm of the temporal, and can never be disregarded without punishment; but the infinite end of man is God Himself. And the glorification of God by the Salvation of souls has an infinity which makes it infinitely higher than any finite end.

THEODOR HAECKER.

(Translated by WALTER C. BREITENFELD.]

RILKE, THE MYSTIC

By K. J. HAHN

To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

—BYRON.

THE ever increasing interest in Rilke, not only in Germany, but in France and England, is a striking phenomenon in the spiritual history of this century. It would seem that in Rilke the thought and feeling of twentieth-century Europe is reflected as in no other poet. It is not so much that Rilke gives symbolic form to the obvious themes of the modern mind and art, but rather

that with his new and unusual inwardness of poetic and cosmic experience Rilke carries his readers to an existential position from which the spiritual questionings of our time appear to be more directly satisfied than elsewhere. Only thus can one explain the fact that a poet who died twenty years ago exercises an ever growing fascination over modern man. It would seem that after the death of the poet his work, which has been so often examined yet never adequately interpreted, is still growing to its inward perfection, just as fruit, although separated from its tree and deprived of all organic connection with it, ripens independently. Whoever attempts to understand Rilke must always bear in mind that through his poetry one arrives at a significant statement of the main questions of our age. Rilke's attitude to the world has for modern man a great spiritual actuality and lends his poetry even greater beauty and perfection.

This fact alone would justify the examination of Rilke's work for its philosophic and religious content. Indeed, his poetry forces such an examination upon the critic, since religious questionings characterize his work more profoundly than that of any other modern poet. It is not that he is the most devout or the most deeply religious poet of our century, but rather that he represents more than any other poet the tendency and the problematic character of modern religious thought and feeling. The most personal experience of modern man is the direct theme of Rilke's poetry, and even after the most frightful of wars the genuineness of his existential utterance has by no means lost its appeal. If, in addition, we recall that Rilke derives from a purely Catholic milieu with which he never lost at least a cultural connexion, it becomes clear why it is legitimate, indeed necessary, to approach his work from the Catholic point of view.

The milieu in which Rilke grew up was, however, extremely unfavourable both to the poet and to the believer. Delicate and the only child of an unhappy marriage, he was left almost entirely to his bigoted and probably hysterical mother. The violence of something like Slavonic piety is undeniable in her theatrical and sentimental Catholicism. Prague, at that time the meeting-place of the Slavonic and Germanic worlds, retained its stamp on the poet to the end.

But in his spiritual development Rilke always obeyed his own inner laws, no matter how weak, delicate, subject to influences and in search of a *Weltanschauung* he might seem to be. Thus it is remarkable how soon he outgrew the limitations of his complacent Austrian setting, always in search of new things; at first in different places in Germany, and then finding in France and Russia the two poles between which his life was henceforth to move. Rilke is the

first European poet to be influenced not by individual Russian authors but by the Russian world itself; this became part of his innermost being. In Rilke the Slavonic soul enters Europe for the first time, not through the literary influence of Dostoyewski or Tolstoi, but through the poet's own personal experience of the Russian spirit. No languages were so close to Rilke as French and Russian, and they remained so until his last lonely years in the Castle of Muzot. In this way Rilke anticipates the process of European thought, which is turning more and more to the Russian mind. But with Rilke there was a much deeper connexion than merely literary and cultural influences, as can be seen from his letters, in which he relates what a profound spiritual experience he had had during Easter in Moscow.

And this explains why the first poems dealing directly with his own religious quest, although deriving exclusively from his Catholic milieu, bear the stamp of Slavonic spirituality. This is the first phase of Rilke's religiosity, the phase of *The Book of Hours*, *The Life of the Virgin Mary* and *Stories of God*. These works established Rilke's fame, but he soon outgrew them. However, there is no sudden break or change of direction in Rilke's life and thought; from *The Book of Hours* he developed in unbroken intellectual progress to the spirituality of *The Elegies of Duino*. For this reason it is to the images and symbols of *The Book of Hours* and *The Life of the Virgin Mary* that one must look for the roots of that cosmic feeling which assumes such a mysterious and unfathomable aspect in his later works, the *Letters from Muzot*, *The Elegies of Duino*, the *Sonnets to Orpheus* and the *Letters about God*.

The external motifs in *The Book of Hours* and *The Life of the Virgin Mary* point unmistakably to Rilke's Catholic origins: the stock themes of Catholic devotion and sacramentals, loosely linked with Russian elements, provide the poet with the working material of his own mystic religiosity. But it would be quite mistaken to confine ourselves to the surface of this liturgical monastic setting and simply to regard Rilke's conception of God as Christian. In *The Book of Hours* he more than satisfies the new mystical requirements of modern thought and does it in a completely unexpected way. But this attempt to give concrete form to his religious ideas led to strange results. A critical examination of the style would indeed show how varied the poems are in form, rhythm, metre and subject-matter, but how difficult it is to distinguish the content of one poem from the other. The images and symbols are vague and the poet is still far from achieving "body", that quality which under the influence of Rodin he achieved in *New Poems*. All this suggests an inner breadth of mystical experience which defies exact form. In *The Book of Hours* his religious experience finds

adequate expression through the skilful use of paradoxical contrasts: the objective nature of the liturgical subject-matter is destroyed by the completely subjective formlessness of the mystical ego, which indeed transcends all definite form. Rilke's religious experience here bears the imprint of Russian religiosity. Of this influence he is well aware. The similes and symbols in which he attempts to reproduce the infinite content of his experience of God no longer have anything in common with the God of revelation, with the static, hierarchic universe of Catholicism. The structure of his thought is characterized by breadth and formlessness of feeling, and by the cosmic agitation of his whole existence, which is thus subject to a higher divine movement. The more profoundly Rilke concerns himself with religious experience, the more striking these two aspects of his feeling become: cosmic agitation and a nameless obscure breadth. "Give her silence and let the soul come back home to the manifold, the flowing, in which she lived, waxing, wide and wise" (Music, *The Picture Book*). In *The Book of Hours* the poet speaks of the "wide process of reality that moves about thee, thou growing one".

It would be tempting to examine Rilke's conception of a "becoming God", but that is impossible within the limits of this essay. It may well have its roots in the pantheistic ideas of Goethe, in the ontology of Hegel's philosophy of history and in the metaphysical vitalism of Nietzsche. Whatever its origin, Rilke's experience of God finds its own personal form. Almost imperceptibly he changes the ordered and fixed content of Christian belief and transposes it into the world of the "nameless" and of cosmic agitation.

In *The Life of the Virgin Mary*, too, the images derive their meaning not from the Christian Credo, although it is not necessary to dwell upon their possible divergence from it, but take us back into the mythical realm of being of primitive man, which lies altogether outside the Christian world. Even the poems of this period that appear to be most Christian stand "on the fringe of Christianity".

In a hidden process which however reveals itself in manifold similes Rilke's thought and experience is moving into a sphere which precludes formal expression and dialectical thought. His experience of innermost, existential "agitation" leads his thought in a thousand subtle transitions to the most hidden processes of the mysticism of things—leads him to yield to nameless cosmic pan-dynamism, which is alien to all Christian theology.

Thy mode of being is so quiet.

And those who call thee with noisy names

are forgotten before they approach thy neighbourhood.

The same experience finds stronger expression in the line:

Thou art the dark unconscious one.

If we consider the development of his poetry from beginning to end, we see that the concrete and the revealed have no permanent place in the unfathomable divine transcendence. Rilke's thought passes over to the absolute namelessness of cosmic being in which God loses his personal nature and man his individual form. This is not presented as the final definite end attained, but as the goal towards which he moves in his subtle philosophical development. *Briefe aus Muzot*, p. 139 f.: "It is only in the 'blindness' of our fate that we are really closely related to the wonderfully inarticulate world, that is to the whole, the unsurveyable and to the transcending."

This development of his religious experience, leading to such trains of thought, supplies the content of all his creative work. Rilke's poetry offers no final solutions, nor does it lead us into a world in which the problematical nature of existence is resolved, even if it be only in complete surrender to a higher being. From traditional modes of religious experience the poet develops in never-ending unrest and spiritual agitation to these new contents. Looked at from this point of view, Rilke's poetry is seen to be in a continual state of transition and that is the mystery, the attraction and the suggestive character of his art:

For this is destiny: being opposite,
and nothing else, and always opposite.

This steady, unflagging process, in which the poet's spirit rises above the forms of our faith, that are to him but dry bones through which no spirit breathes, also characterizes his attitude towards nature. In his spiritual world nature takes on an ever-growing significance. The most perfect creations of his art arise from the union of his mystical strivings with his experience of concrete "thingness", to which must be added the fruitful influence which Rodin's way of work exercised over the poet. It was the paradoxical sharpness of contrast which became truly creative as rarely before in the history of literature: Dostoyewski's *shirokaya natura* is here wedded to the plastic *modèle* of Rodin—indeed a *hieros gamos* to which we owe the *New Poems* of the Paris period. But his spiritual conception of nature is still not satisfied. The earthly becomes the bliss-giving content of his whole spiritual existence. Nature, the world of things, of animals and plants, the biological in its whole extent, opens up before him and takes possession of his soul. It is particularly characteristic of this last

stage in his development that he combines heightened spirituality with profound respect for the natural and the organic.

If we consider his experience of nature we see that it corresponds to his existential agitation. Nature in growth presents itself to him as a form of movement of cosmic dimensions which goes to the very centre of his religiosity. Wherever the natural appears in the work of Rilke, it is as the function and effect of the mythical elemental forces of nature which take their place in the stream of cosmic agitation:

Such is the wondrous play of forces,
passing so serviceably through things:
growing in roots, vanishing into the trunks,
and in the tree-tops like a resurrection.

Thus Rilke does not experience the organic world as such, but he transposes it more and more into the immanent cosmic stream which, especially in his later works, he sees as a purely spiritual process. This process is the inspiration of all his poems. In them his mind is always at work transforming the sharpness and stiffness of things into the breadth and rhythm of spiritual being. A classical example of this unique mode of experiencing reality is the poem in which he describes the face of the dead poet:

Those who had seen him living saw no trace
Of his deep unity with all that passes,
for these: these shadowy vales and waving grasses
and streams of running water were his face.

Oh yes, his face was this remotest distance,
that seeks him still and woos him in despair . . .

Rilke's manifold use of comparisons with "growing" and "ripening" also suggests that the natural movement of growth has taken on a magic significance for the poet. The growth of nature has been completely caught up in cosmic agitation, and thus it is possible for the poet to write:

Even though our minds reject it,
God ripens,

and again

God, the root, has borne fruit.

(The mysterious and not always acceptable symbol of the "tree" also belongs here.)

These examples may help us to understand why Rilke has become one of the great poets of movement. His mind is possessed

by a deep inward movement and with unerring perception and creative energy it traces all the forms of falling, streaming, flowing, growing and sounding (*Music: The breathing of statues*) and integrates them into the vast spaciousness of an infinite flux. Rilke has expressed this experience in the celebrated essay: *Experience*. In the garden of the Castle of Duino he leans into the fork of a tree and suddenly experiences a scarcely perceptible rhythm which the tree communicates to him although no wind is noticeable:

He became more and more surprised, indeed deeply moved by the effect of that which uninterruptedly passed over into him. It seemed to him that he had never been filled with more gentle motions, his body was being somehow treated like a soul, and enabled to receive a degree of influence, which, given the normal obscurity of physical conditions, it should not have been possible to feel at all. In addition, he could not at first distinguish the sense through which he received such a subtle and all-pervasive communication. . . . Nevertheless, concerned as he always was to explain to himself precisely his least perceptible impressions, he insistently asked himself what was happening to him then, and almost at once found an expression that satisfied him, saying to himself, that he had got to the other side of Nature.

Rilke is fully conscious of the unique significance of this particular experience. It was not by chance, he felt, that it was a tree, the most obvious symbol of growth, which had enabled him to break through the outer covering of the physical and natural world of forms and to be directly admitted into the movement which flows into our world from cosmic spaces. He felt that human life must be completely changed by such an experience and that the sense of human uniqueness, which is bound up with our conception of individuality, was thereby decisively affected. He wrote to Clara Rilke:

It is particularly the end which I understand: that there are really no decisions. That is true. For if, again and again, one thing moves out of the other so naturally, without violence, there is no room left for decisions. The chain unrolls, link by link, and one hangs on the other, easily and yet firmly determined, mobile and yet placed in an infinite context.

Individual man is received in an infinite context of being which strives to overcome the frontiers of individuality and also the separation between this world and the next. This is at bottom the innermost value of nature: she offers man the possibility of entering into the "infinite context".

Rilke is fully aware that with this he has given up Christianity:

Transitoriness falls everywhere into profound being. And therefore all the forms of the here and now are not merely to be used in a time-limited way, but, so far as we can, to be integrated into those superior significances in which we share. But not in the *Christian sense* (from which I more and more passionately withdraw), but, in a purely earthly, profoundly earthly, blissfully earthly consciousness, what is here seen and touched must be integrated into the wider, the widest context. Not into a Beyond, whose shadow darkens the earth, but into a whole, into *the whole*.

Using Romano Guardini's term, one may call this attitude "finitism". In reality the finite is also dissolved in the origin of the mythical process, which permeates world, nature, thing and man. Rilke experiences this most strongly with the sexes, in the mystery of procreation, of birth and love. In these themes there is revealed to the poet the "blood-stream" which links all men together, and in the act of procreation and in the expectant mother he sees the symbols of those moments in which the cosmic movement joins one link of the human chain to the other. In such a cosmic feeling there is no longer any room for a transcendent, personal God, whose transcendence is only overcome by revelation and the incarnation of the Logos; the divine being is experienced on the mythical level of the "blood-stream" and in complete surrender to existential agitation. The well-known letter to Ilse Blumenthal-Weiss (28 December, 1921) expresses it in the following way:

I have an indescribable confidence in those peoples who have *not* reached God through belief, but have experienced God by means of their innermost nationality, in their tribe. Like the Jews, the Arabs, in a certain degree the Orthodox Russians—and then, in a different way, the peoples of the East and of Ancient Mexico. Since, for them, God is what they have come from, he is also what is to come. For the others he is something derivative, something they strive away from or towards, like strangers or grown-strangers—and thus they continually require the Mediator, the Connector, the man who translates their blood, the idiom of their blood, into the language of the divinity. Then indeed the achievement of these peoples is "Belief"; they have to overcome themselves and to educate themselves in order to hold *as true* what, for the born theists, *is true*; and hence their religions slide so easily into morality. . . . Religion is something infinitely simple, simple-minded. It is not knowledge. . . . It is neither duty nor renunciation nor limitation: but . . . a direction of the heart. . . . That the Arab at certain hours turns to the east and prostrates himself—that is religion. It is hardly "Belief". It has no opposite. It is a natural agitation within an existence through which the wind of God will rush three times a day, so long as we are at least this: supple.

Such an experience of God eludes all concepts and creeds. In decisive contrast to Christian theology, for which revelation is the source, Rilke henceforth speaks only of "natural agitation"

in the breath of a cosmic being, of the "direction of the heart", for which "direction" religion is "something infinitely simple, simple-minded". Objective contemplation and discursive thought are dissolved in the ardour of a passionate unrest anchored in blood, unrest which Rilke discovers in Eastern peoples such as the Russians, the Jews and the Arabs.

. . . Nothing's so dumb
as a god's mouth . . .

In his book on Rilke, Robert Poitrou writes: "Son mysticisme répond trop bien à l'inquiétude religieuse de l'homme moderne, et dans une note jamais entendue: assez voisine du christianisme pour ne pas effaroucher les chrétiens, assez loin de lui pour attirer l'agnosticiste" (Paris, 1938, p. 251). Only in so far as Rilke is thus the most powerful expression of Western man can we call him a "poete europeen" as Poitrou does. But if we probe more deeply into the context of literary history we find that in Rilke's religiosity developments become manifest which pass beyond the frontiers of both European and Christian thought. Rilke's life also forsakes the cultural *oikoumene* of the West. He penetrates deep into the spiritual interior of Russia and receives influences that are not included in the ancient classical conception of culture, he comes into contact with the Arabic world and looks still further east (vide Buddha poems). Here again Rilke is the transition, the threshold to new worlds. If concrete form, law and concept are the characteristics of European thought, provided always that the world of mystical experience is not excluded, then Rilke not only moves "on the fringe of Christianity", but also on the border of Europe. Objective thought is sacrificed to a complete surrender to the "nameless":

For young people Christ is a great danger, he is much too close and stands in the way of God. They accustom themselves to expressing the divine in human measure, they pamper themselves with human things and later on they freeze in the austere alpine air of eternity. They wander about among Christ and Madonnas and saints and lose themselves with forms and voices. They are disappointed with that which is half-related to themselves, which arouses neither their wonder nor their fear and does not tear them away from the everyday world. They are modestly resigned, they should be immodest in order to win God.

In contrast to the world of forms of the Christian faith, Rilke moves into a religiosity from which everything visual and literary slips away, a religiosity which is impelled by the force of nameless, anonymous movement. His whole work is situated on this frontier

of his spiritual existence and because of its frontier and crisis character his poetry is something more than an ephemeral phenomenon of modern thought. The realm of the unconscious, the modern world's fantastic experience of movement, anthroposophical and spiritistic trends of thought, the rich and vast mentality of the Slavonic East, the subtle musicality, the break with tradition and convention, the deep and joyless solitude of modern man—all these themes have found in Rilke utterance and an image. In all this he retains his transitional character, also by the fact that in 1901 he formally left the Church but yet agreed to be buried according to the Roman rite.

However much Rilke's religiosity withdraws from the God of revelation, from the Logos, it would seem that he stands in the Christian position without himself being Christian. In a felicitous comparison Hans-Urs von Balthasar, S.J., likens Rilke's religiosity to the existential philosophy of Martin Heidegger which is no less characterized by a Christian attitude yet lacking in Christian faith. (*Die Apokalypse der deutschen Seele*, III, Salzburg-Leipzig, 1939.) In this position Rilke has created works whose merit, inwardness and significance for us today are beyond doubt, and this makes him important for Christian thought. To give but one example:

How small the strife that occupied us,
how great is all that strives with us!
We might, if, like the things outside us,
we let the great storm override us,
grow spacious and anonymous.

In the greatness and the uniqueness of his poetic personality and in the aesthetic perfection of his work Rilke will not cease to fertilize European thought; Rilke, to whom the works can be applied with which he describes the "contemplator":

He triumphs now in being defeated
by the inconquerably great.

Thus he stands amid the discord and the danger of the twentieth century, a century of the keenest spiritual crises. The harmony of spirit and universe is destroyed, the ancient Western world is threatened, and a world war, frightful alike in its scale and methods, has exposed every individual to material danger, long after the spiritual danger had been inescapable. Thus the problematic nature of human existence has become almost intolerable. Rilke did not escape this problematic world, yet he believes that by serving it and by exalting it he can master it:

And then the Nameless, beyond guess or gaze,
how can you call it, conjure it?—I praise.

In Rilke's poetry religious questionings appear in all their acuteness and bear urgent witness to the danger which threatens the continuity and tradition of Western thought. Before man as seen by Rilke there yawns a realm of the nameless, the anonymous, a realm in which creative thinking and planning comes to an end. And yet man as seen by Rilke can never deny his Christian origin and he will remain close to it in all the unrest of his search for God, in his insatiable urge towards fulfilment and redemption, and in his humble belief in the power of the spirit and of art.

In his deep consciousness that no other attitude than genuine humility is possible in the face of the incomprehensible workings of God, Rilke has given his poetry a content that will always fill the believing Christian with admiration and respect. How great the power of his humility was can be seen from words uttered in judgement of the German people in its reaction to defeat in 1918. He finds words which, it is true, did not influence the course of history, but which remain a permanent memorial as a genuine answer to exaggerated nationalism:

For me, as I see things and have to experience them in accordance with my nature and disposition, there can be no doubt that it is Germany, who by not knowing herself, is holding up the world. The manifold composition of my blood and the wide education which it has given me, enables me to detach myself in a special manner so that I can realize this fact. In 1918, in the hour of collapse, Germany might have put everyone, the whole world to shame and moved them most profoundly by an act of deep sincerity and conversion. By a visible and determined act of renunciation, by renouncing her corrupt prosperity, in a word by an act of humility which is essentially and infinitely hers and forms an element of her dignity, she might have anticipated everything which others would have dictated to her as humiliation. Then—this I hoped for a moment—there would have been impressed upon the German countenance which has become so strangely one-sided and one-willed, that lost lineament of humility which strikes one in Dürer's drawings as so constructive. Perhaps there were a few people who felt this, whose wishes and whose confident hope were turned towards such a correction—now it is becoming obvious, and we are already being punished for it, that this correction did *not* take place. Something is lacking which would have restored everything to its right measure; Germany has neglected to give her purest measure, her best measure restored on its oldest foundation—she has not renewed herself completely, she has not changed her mind, she has not created for herself that dignity which is rooted in innermost humility.

K. J. HAHN.

THE RELIGIOUS POETRY OF HÖLDERLIN

By W. B. GALLIE

ALMOST all Hölderlin's mature poetry can be described as religious, inasmuch as its originality lies in a certain way of seeing things, a peculiar slant or vision, which can be described only in religious terms. This is true of his love poetry, his descriptive lyrics, his strangely dithyrambic elegies, the prophetic pieces which express his views as to the future of poetry and of the German nation, quite as much as of the poems which are directly concerned with religious scenes, persons, events. And it is shown as much by particular words and phrases as by the general spirit of his poems. Thus in his love poems to "Diotima" he writes of the "guardian-god" of their love, and of the "inner god" they felt "between" them. He describes himself as fastened by a spell "as if sent by the gods" on the bridge that leads into Heidelberg. He constantly personifies the forces of nature in ways that recall, though they by no means simply imitate, classical mythology. The "return of the gods" is Hölderlin's favourite way of describing a genuine revival of human culture, particularly (though not exclusively) communal or social culture. The adjective "god-forsaken" expresses his most famous criticism of the society he knew. Hölderlin's "religious vision" contained some typically romantic, perhaps even some hysterical, elements; but I believe that his best writings give us an invaluable statement both of what religion in general is and of what is most living—what men can still get most from, directly, without "historical revaluation"—in the two religions or religious cultures which have clearly contributed most to our civilization: the essentially prophetic, Messianic religion of Christ and the essentially life-accepting yet tragic religion we find in the great Greek poets.

Hölderlin's general views as to what religion is (his philosophy of religion) are sketched out in his *Fragment on Religious Ideas*. To examine Hölderlin's characteristic uses of religious phrases and symbols, in the light of the general theory of the *Fragment*, would be an interesting literary study; but it would not, in itself, help to validate that theory. At best it would show an impressive consistency between the generalizations of the *Fragment* and the immediate feelings and intuitions expressed in the poems. But a few of Hölderlin's poems enable us to see something more than this. Three of his last "hymns" in free rhythm, *Patmos*, *Der Einzige* (*The Only One*) and *Versöhnender* (*Reconciler*) may be considered as experimental verifications (whether fully successful or not remains to be considered) of his general theory of religion. How are these

"experiments" contrived? In these poems Hölderlin presents us with certain conflicts within Christianity and between Christianity and Greek religion as he conceived these. And he offers us certain solutions or reconciliations of these conflicts which, quite evidently, derive what force and validity they possess from the peculiarity of his general view of religion as expressed in the *Fragment*. Such experimental verification clearly presupposes at least three qualities in the poetry concerned: (1) that it shall succeed in creating the peculiar climate of thought and feeling of the two religions in question; (2) that it shall pick out and bring into focus some of the vital issues on which they conflict, and make us aware of these, not on the abstract plane of theological or philosophical thought, but on the plane of immediate (even if imaginative) response—that it shall make us *feel* the difference of different religious appeals, challenges, commands; (3) that it shall display a spirit of fairness, or freedom from bias, as between these different religious appeals, in so far as this is humanly possible. Granted these conditions, and granted that the poet has a religious vision of his own, then it does seem possible that the conflicting appeals he is concerned with, by articulating themselves within this vision, will be made to show, as it were from their own unsuspected resources, the ways in which the desired reconciliation can be brought about.

But do the poems I have mentioned provide these necessary conditions? Since the worthwhileness of the whole experimental procedure depends on them, I shall try to make good this point, by a few illustrations, at the start. (For the sake of readers who do not know German I have attempted English versions throughout. These, may it be remembered by those who know Hölderlin's poetry, are intended to bring out its *thought*; they are not direct transcriptions, though they keep close to Hölderlin's words, still less do they aim at reproducing poetic beauties.) Here, for example, is Hölderlin's picture of St. John, the beloved disciple, and of Christ at the Last Supper;

. . . the beloved of God,
The seer, who in his blissful youth

Had walked beside
The Son of the Most High, inseparably;
For he who commanded storms loved the simplicity
Of the youth, and the other, a watchful diligent man,
Saw distinctly the living face of God,
When at the hour of the mystery of the vine
They sat together, at the supper, the feast,
And in his greatness, calmly foreknowing,

Forth spoke The Lord of his death and the end of love; for never
 Had he words enough for his say
 Of kindness, or to soothe,
 When he saw it, the wrath of the world.

(*Patmos*, ls. 74-86.)

Hölderlin's evocations of Greek religious life, with its festivals and local pieties and its art that essentially belonged to the whole community, are, at their best, not less impressive than these lines from *Patmos*. But it is when he turns to a direct statement of the conflict between the appeal of Christianity and that of Greek religion that he strikes out a form of poetry that is entirely his own. Consider these verses from *The Only One*:

So much have I seen
 Of beauty, so much have sung
 Of the living image of God
 Moving as one among men.
 And yet, you ancient gods
 And glorious sons of the gods,
 Still there is one I seek,
 One whom I love among you,
 One the last of your race,
 The jewel of your house,
 Held back from the questing stranger.

My Master and Lord!
 Oh you, my teacher!
 Why did you hold
 So far off? Why,
 When I asked among them, the ancient
 Heroes and gods, why still
 Did you stand apart? And now
 My soul is heavy with fear,
 Lest you, ye heavenly ones,
 Grow jealous, and if I cleave
 To the one, the others will fail me.

But yet I know the fault is mine!
 Too much, O Christ,
 I cling to you,
 To you, Hercules' brother.
 Yes, and I have made bold
 To name you brother of Bacchus too
 Who yoked the tigers to his wain
 And eastward journeying
 Even to the Indus,
 Commanding joyful service,
 Planted his wine-staves on the hills
 And stayed the furies of the peoples!

But love will claim
 One object only. This time too much
 From my own heart
 The song has come.
 I will make good the fault
 When next, if ever next, I sing.
 Never do I strike, as I could wish,
 The mean. And only a god
 Knows when will come my best, that I desire. . . .

(*Der Einzige*, vs. 3, 4, 5, and 7.)

It would be difficult, I think, not to feel *with* the poet something of the conflict he here so passionately expresses. And this is the conflict, between the values and message of Greece and those of Judaea, which was to exercise—and sometimes torture—many of the most energetic and sensitive minds of the nineteenth century. Today the problem may seem remote, certainly less urgent than the “life and death” issues of the present. But it may well be that these issues would not be so menacingly urgent had thinkers of the last century solved more satisfactorily problems of the kind Hölderlin poses, and were their solutions available to direct and sanify the practical tasks of today. For surely there is far too little *clear* belief, on all sides, as to the kind of life that we want to save in the present human crisis, and that is worth saving. (And by clear belief I mean defensible belief, based on the seeing of things that others can be got to see for themselves.) In this situation, since Hölderlin at least saw clearly the kind of life *he* thought worth saving (and perhaps the future will show that only a life seen to be worth saving is capable of being saved by men) I think it is well worth while discussing Hölderlin’s religious views; first the general theory of religion we find in the *Fragment*, and then the applications and attempted verifications of it we find in the three poems I have mentioned.

The *Fragment* begins from the questions: Are men ever in a relation to the world around them which is other than that of *need* (from man’s side) and *compulsion* (from the side of external nature)? And, if there is such a relation, can it unite man with the best he can conceive and desire, and bring him a satisfaction deeper than, e.g., the fulfilment of his animal needs? Hölderlin answers first, that man can lift himself above need and compulsion exactly in so far as he can feel *grateful for his life* and thus attain a peculiar “togetherness” with the world around him and a corresponding satisfaction. The latter differs from animal—or any other so-called “actual” satisfaction—in being positive: in contrast with e.g. the way sleep follows repletion, this “higher” satisfaction drives a man back refreshed to the problems and difficulties of

the "actual" world (of need and compulsion). As to the togetherness, thought alone can never grasp it adequately. For—to give only one of Hölderlin's arguments—thought always abstracts: but if we try to abstract an instance of this togetherness from the circumstance (Sphäre) in which it occurs, we at once lose the essence of it. Memory (Hölderlin must be thinking of the memory which is akin to habit) and traditions are, by themselves, even less equipped than abstract thought for grasping the nature of the required togetherness; they simply ossify it. The required relation of togetherness is therefore to be defined, first, by the positive characteristic of gratitude (evidently intended as the direct contrary of need), and secondly by its effects—the positive character of the satisfaction it brings. We feel that there is "a god" in the world, when we feel that our relation to the world contains *something more than compulsion and need*.

Hölderlin now turns to a clarification of the notions, "a god", "one man's god", "different men's gods" and—the end term of his progressive analysis—"a godhead common to all men". In so far as one man has the required (religious) relation to something in the world around him he has "a god" which is also certainly "his god". At this stage he can—or should—speak only for himself. But it is also possible for a number of men to have "a god" in common. How, then, can we know that they have the *same* god—assuming that each enjoys a relation which fulfils Hölderlin's conditions? Hölderlin answers: They can have a god in common provided—and it is a big proviso—they really have a common life lifted above compulsion and need, i.e. have a *truly human* life in common. And it is thus possible that all men could have "a common godhead"; but only in so far as they all shared a common life, lifted above compulsion and need.

The rest of the *Fragment* consists of two reminders. First, that men have the capacity of putting themselves in the place of other men and thus, in imagination, reliving the particular situation (Sphäre) in which another has his god. This capacity should be used in a spirit of active tolerance as between one religion and another. But, secondly, a certain wariness is needed: for there are false gods—set up by craven or brutal men who have never attained gratitude for their lives. We might call these "idols": embodiments of parts of the world of compulsion and need to which brutes and cravens give an essentially "untrue" and unreal worship. For they are not grateful in the way the true religious relation requires: they are not lifted above compulsion and need, they are out for what they can get in terms of these.

Such, in brief, is the thesis of the *Fragment*. Its phraseology echoes certain Greek usages and suggests (very surprisingly) some

of the most memorable sentences of Marx. But what many readers may feel and ask is this: Is Hölderlin describing religion at all? Does he know what religion really is? For he writes of "a god", "one man's god", "the possibility of a common godhead", but not of God, God-as-such so to say, who is the proper object of all developed religions. I do not wish (and have not the capacity) to enter into argument on this point. But I think that these very natural objections can in part be met if we make two inferences from the thesis of the *Fragment*, the second of which, at least, I feel certain Hölderlin would have accepted. First, it would be quite consistent with Hölderlin's views to define God (God-as-such) *either* as the common ground of every different instance of the religious relation, as experienced by individuals or whole communities: *or* as the specific form of religious relation "to the world around them" which would arise when, or in so far as, all men possess a truly human life in common, lifted above compulsion and need. And perhaps these two definitions might be combined—the latter being used to suggest a positive content for the former. Second, it is clear when a group of men have, in Hölderlin's phrase, a god in common, this is often due to one man, a teacher or prophet, known to the group either by acquaintance or through a living tradition or myth. (In the latter case the religious contribution of a number of men is often crystallized in one figure: Hercules or Bacchus for instance.) Such a teacher (assuming he gives no "false god") would very naturally be himself an object of that disinterested gratitude which is for Hölderlin the hall-mark of the religious relation. And if any such teacher had, in some sense, made possible a situation (*Sphäre*) in which all men could share a "common godhead", then the gratitude felt towards him by his followers might well be of a unique, and most importantly unique, kind. For they would realize that the religious relation they now *actually* enjoyed was *potentially* for all men, and that it was theirs as a trust for all men. And this realization, while it might add unpleasantly to their own self-importance, would also contain humbling elements and would certainly increase their gratitude, as men representative of all men, towards their religious teacher. Alternatively we could say that such a teacher would be entitled to claim—for his example or teaching (his revelation or prophecy of his "God for all men")—a devotion unique in kind: but not necessarily such (let us add) as to exclude devotion to other (lesser) teachers, or to other persons (real or imaginary) who have enabled men to enjoy, in more limited ways, the religious relation with the world around them.

These two inferences, both of which the theory of the *Fragment* admits, may not perhaps remove the objections raised above to Hölderlin's theory of religion. But they do enable us to see how

Hölderlin could feel real reverence for the different gods of Greek religion and yet admit the unique position of Christ and the justice of his claim to a unique devotion. And they enable us to give a meaning, consistent with Hölderlin's other beliefs and usages, to the few (the very few) passages of his poems in which he writes of God (*der Gott*) or of The God of Gods (*der Götter Gott*) or of the Father. But God, interpreted as the common ground of different instances of the religious relation or as the realization of one particular species of this relation, remains a very vague conception and—some will urge, perhaps rightly—for religious purposes a quite unhelpful one. But in the *Fragment* Hölderlin says nothing of God's will, or of how he stands to or works in and through Nature. On one related point, however, his view is unmistakable: the religious relation exists "in Nature": its instances are as real as those of any other relation. Indeed, if we may judge from the satisfaction men can derive from them, they are "further-reaching" than any of the relations that determine compulsion and need. On the other hand, like everything else in Nature, they are subject to "natural interferences", to overthrow, corruption and decay. They may disappear totally, together with the devotion they inspire. This gives rise to one of the main problems Hölderlin faces in his poetry, particularly in *Patmos*. Again, my suggested interpretation of the uniqueness Hölderlin recognized in Christ leaves open—what is the main problem of *The Only One* and *Reconciler*—the question of Christ's specific relation to, or religious status among, the "other gods" who, in more limited ways, have made possible the religious relation between men (certain men) and parts of the world around them. In so far as Hölderlin's poetry can be used to test the validity of his general theory, it is on these issues that the theory will be found to stand or fall.

The problem of "The Only One" (see the stanzas quoted on pages 61, 62) is that of Christ's relation to the other gods, of whom Hercules and Bacchus are taken as examples. Or, looked at from the other side, it is the problem of how men should regard Christ's unique situation (and claim to devotion) in view of the existence of these other gods. In its general form this question is best put in a second (and quite clearly provisional, incomplete) version of the poem. Here Hölderlin's thought is very condensed, but I think reasonably clear.

But the problem which

Tries me is this: that as sons of God they should each

Bear of necessity signs of this. . . .

But Christ is a law to himself.

Like guardian—princes Hercules: Bacchus the god of communal
feeling: Christ

Is the goal. And surely of other nature than theirs. And yet
 He fulfilled what the others lacked
 In making present the divine. . . .

The others, then, like Christ are "sons of God". They were either the object of the religious relation, or else they made possible instances of this relation between men (certain men) and the world around them. It is for this reason that they "bear of necessity" the signs of their status and achievement. But no sooner do we compare their achievement with Christ's than we see his uniqueness. He is the goal: he fulfils what they lacked "in making present the divine". And yet this very fact—of his supplementing and completing their work—only raises in a new form the question of his relation to them. We run into contradictions: we are tempted to say his work was of the same kind as theirs—but of a different order; or something as vague as this and (as it stands) as meaningless.

Returning to the original version of *The Only One* we find three characteristics—or more accurately, one characteristic and two relational properties—by means of which Hölderlin tries to explain Christ's uniqueness. First, he is a teacher. In what sense is evident enough. Though his moral teaching by no means exhausts the significance of Christ's ministry and mission, it is certainly an essential part of what has inspired men's worship of him. And secondly

Love will claim
 One object only. . . .

Again, I think it is sufficiently plain what characteristic Christian feeling *towards* Christ is here referred to. Most men desire a "loved master". And Christ, though at times he saw the moral danger inherent in such a desire, was as a rule more than ready to comply with it. No sooner, however, has Hölderlin confessed the presence of such an attitude in himself than he retracts it.

But yet, I know the fault is mine!
 Too much, O Christ,
 I cling to you,

and again:

This time too much
 From my own heart
 The song has come.

Human weakness, as such, did not seem to Hölderlin a satisfactory basis for religious feeling—particularly when directed on to a God who made the widest and most strenuous moral claims on human nature. Besides, the love that arises from human weakness is very much a matter of *need*: it lacks a certain disinterestedness—

not necessarily alien to passion—which Hölderlin had found in his own religious experience. Hölderlin seems here to recognize that (apparent) moral ambivalence of which others, particularly Nietzsche, were later to accuse Christianity. Hölderlin (typically) makes no accusation: he detects a weakness in himself, and perhaps, by implication, in others. This has the effect of ruling out one possible solution of his problem—a purely “emotional solution”, if one may use that term. This could never have satisfied him, morally or intellectually. Hölderlin had seen too much of beauty (let alone sung) ever to forget (still less deny) the claims of certain religious values of which Christ tells us nothing.

Hölderlin still has his problem on his hands. He still fails “to strike the mean” and to achieve that “best” which is beyond his power to command. But at the very point when his thought seems to be resigning itself to failure it throws up certain phrases, images, which suggest (or, more accurately, echo) the desired solution. The last stanza of *The Only One* (original version) opens with a description of Christ as “a caged eagle” while on earth and of the fears of those who then saw him. Its last lines are:

Captive like him are the souls of heroes.
And poets too, the unworldly,
Must work in the world.

What is the purpose of this juxtaposition of ideas? Why, first, does Hölderlin mention that the disciples were afraid? (And why were they afraid?) The disciples may have feared Christ’s moral supremacy, with a fear that is akin to shame. They were certainly afraid *for* him, out of natural solicitude. But deeper than either of these fears, perhaps, and underlying both, was a fear of and for him because of the unthinkable, the to them unfaceable demand his teaching and his own conception of his mission imposed—on *them*. He demanded too much: his disciples, ordinary men, inevitably felt this. He demanded too much—that they should not only do, but witness, too much. Not that what he demanded was wrong, or seemed to them wrong. At the very least, to have its proper effect his demand (of himself and of them) could not have been put in more qualified, “reasonable”, watered-down form. And yet—for living, for men who felt the natural calls and values of living (the natural virtues of living which other “gods” have personified)—he demanded more than could be borne. This, almost certainly, is Hölderlin’s idea. It is echoed in *Patmos*, and it links up with another favourite idea of Hölderlin’s, expressed both in *Patmos* and *Reconciler* . . . that Christ never had the time or the words in which to say his full say of the blessings and happiness he had known in ordinary living. He was a “caged eagle”, like all heroic

souls, because of the limitations which circumstance imposed on his teaching and his conception of his mission. Now how does this idea link up with the *fear* Christ inspired, and with admonition (that the unworldly too must work in the world) with which Hölderlin ends his poem? Two portentous lines of his earlier poem, *Reconciler*, provide the answer:

You know it, that not to live but to die, you were sent,
And each God is greater than his field. . . .

From the pen of a clever free-thinker, a Voltaire, a Renan, a Nietzsche, a Samuel Butler, the first of these lines might seem very apt, a very neat way of hitting the nail on the head—and yet somehow too slick. But none of these writers could conceivably have set it next to the line which follows it and immensely enlarges its meaning. Here, then, we have the second characteristic which really helps us to understand Christ's uniqueness. He made one conception, one example, of death the object of man's religious relation. And this certainly explains one aspect of his uniqueness. It gives his appeal its comprehensiveness—all men die. But it does not show how his appeal supplements those of other gods: how he fulfils what they lacked "in making present the divine".

Reconciler, written a year before *The Only One* (which thus marked a return by Hölderlin to his central problem), contains his fullest and most satisfactory statement of its solution. The poem, written to celebrate the Peace of Lunéville, begins with an outpouring of gratitude. Peace has come to Europe, and of all the gods it is Christ whom Hölderlin thinks of, as embodying what peace now means to him. He goes on to describe, by a series of impressionistic touches, the festivities—at once Christian and pre-Christian—that are being prepared in the countryside around him. The workshops are closed; all nature seems more joyful. The poet feels only one regret, that in the past his feeling for such moments as this has not included the god, "the grave and tender friend of Man", whom now he would invite first of all the gods to share and complete his happiness. And he recalls similar hours and scenes, of rest and recreation, suggested in the Gospels. But the Fatality which shadowed Christ, cut these short just when he was beginning to speak. . . . Nothing can make good the bitterness of such loss; but, Hölderlin reminds us, every manifestation of God

is too hard for us to hold.
For, were the giver not careful,
Long since had the spark for the hearth
Consumed both roof and floor.

And we must remember that the "unholdable" quality of divine gifts is an essential part of their character. We cannot grasp—understand—they. Fire, sunlight, the waves of the sea, the things which bring us the deepest joys, can never be familiar to us, can never be understood as we understand ourselves and our fellows. This should teach us wise humility.

From here Hölderlin returns to his main theme:

Therefore, divine one, be present among us now,
Come, yet more beautiful than ever of old,
Reconciler, oh now be reconciled,
That we this evening may bring you among our friends,
To sing with them from the hill-tops, and celebrate
You and the other gods.

In support of this appeal Hölderlin urges an argument which might seem sophistical in any thinker less patently sincere. He recalls some of the promises contained in the gospel, that after Christ's death further knowledge of him would be given to the disciples, and a new age begin. And he urges that this time has come *now*. There follow the lines:

You know it, that not to live but to die, you were sent,
And each God is greater than his field,
In this resembling the God of Gods.

The further idea introduced by this last line may be left till we consider *Patmos*, where Hölderlin treats more fully the problem of God (God-as-such) and his relation to Nature. How does the key sentence "And each God is greater than his field" help us to conceive the reconciliation Hölderlin desires between Christ and "the other gods"? The last stanza of the poem shows us how to interpret it.

For, when the hour has struck,
And the master steps from his workshop,
What else does he then put on
But his dress for the feast,
As a sign that he holds for the future
Other work in store.
So he seems humbler and greater at once.
So do you, too,
Grant us, as sons of the living earth,
To keep, whatever their number,
Our feasts and to celebrate,
Without counting, our gods. For each god stands for all.
Be like the sunlight! and let your days
Be feasted more gloriously as the light declines,
And remain with us, and be ours.

The image of the Master leaving his workshop must, I think, be construed as follows. *Mastery* always involves the keeping of something in store—a reserve of power, capacity, virtue, for other fields, dangers, tests, opportunities. But this is not true either of religious love and adoration or of the beauty—of person or character—which inspires these. Quite evidently it is the complete self-giving of Christ that has moved so profoundly so many generations of Christian worshippers. And the completeness of his self-giving seems to require as complete a devotion of gratitude in return. When Christ's self-sacrifice is conceived (as at a certain moment of Christian thought it must be conceived) in abstraction from Messianic promises and hopes, this point becomes ever plainer. For death ends what a man potentially is (or keeps in store) even more irretrievably than it ends what he actually was or did: the latter can at least be remembered, and may have prolonged effects on men's lives and thoughts.

And yet Hölderlin is definitely suggesting that the completeness of devotion which Christ at once exemplifies and demands is somehow a sign of lack of mastery. And if we consider first Christ's *demand* for complete devotion, Hölderlin's point has a certain force. (We can compare on this issue Christ's attitude with that of the Buddha or of Socrates.) There is a marked finality of tone, especially of command ("Follow thou me") running through the Gospels: and we may notice how effectively Hölderlin uses his image of the Master to point the moral:

Thus he seems humbler and greater at once.

But Hölderlin's vision of Christ was far too powerful to let him rest content with this line of negative moral criticism. And, indeed, Hölderlin has already supplied the reason why, judged from certain angles, Christ's teaching and mission seem almost forbiddingly insistent and exclusive. He was a caged eagle, and sent not to live but to die—"and each God is greater than his field". Hölderlin's argument is therefore that Christ's complete devotion to his field (his conception of his mission) requires a devotion which is unique but not total or complete in the sense of excluding all other devotions. And Hölderlin is surely right when he sees in the Gospel Christ something more than the supreme embodiment of the moral principle of self-sacrifice. Thus he can with justice appeal to Christ ("Be like the sunlight") to transcend the limits of his own field, and in so doing reveal more fully what he *was*—and the greatness of what he was—in *consciously dedicating himself to that one field*.

But is it legitimate to pass from this position to the thesis that

Christ fulfilled what the other (Greek) gods "lacked in making present the divine"? Is it not plain, rather, that on any interpretation, his conception of life was basically different from the religious conceptions of the Greeks? I think Hölderlin might have answered: Within his own sphere—Judaea of the Augustan era—obviously yes. But Christ made possible a common sphere of worship for all men. And if we examine this notion we see that it involves inherently a *concern* for all the values of daily living—for all that all (or almost all) men hold dear. And thus far, the answer, right or wrong, accords with the kind of "unworldly compromise" all effective Christian churches have had to make on this issue. But Hölderlin wants to go further: he wants men—and Christ—to recognize the "god" in Bacchus and Hercules and Jupiter Hospitalis, and Apollo who is mysteriously sunlight and music at once, and the gods of cities and harvests, and the god Plato's Socrates worshipped, and Socrates' divine Diotima—not to mention Hölderlin's own. For these too embody "life's best". And his claim is that Christ, adequately conceived, can be seen to fulfil—not displace—what these lacked. Or, to use an abstract formula, his claim is that supreme moral goodness inherently contains awareness of, and concern for, all the other forms of goodness.

Lastly, and a most important point, in Hölderlin's view the first move, the first gesture, towards this desired reconciliation must come from the side of Christ (moral goodness). *He* is the reconciler of the other gods; left to themselves they cannot be expected to invite or induce him to reconcile *them*. But Hölderlin's suggestion is that, once the first move is made by Christ, the other gods will recognize both their own lack and Christ's power to make it good. Only granted this recognition will "each god stand for all". The ethical implications of this conception cannot be examined here. Certainly they would be far-reaching and perhaps—for common-sense—hard to accept. This, however, would not seem to me a conclusive argument against the validity of Hölderlin's conception; for have not all great moral innovations at first been hard to accept?

Such in outline is Hölderlin's solution of his main problem. It seems to me to possess, beyond question, one hall-mark of a great achievement of thought. It convinces us that we have arrived somewhere; that we are not only in a new climate of thought but in a position to see new and further things—meanings, consequences and further problems. And our excitement and interest are as much in how we get (or rather how Hölderlin got us) to this new viewpoint as in how we can advance most profitably from the position reached. To use a mechanical metaphor, the force with which Hölderlin drives our thought forward reacts back with equal force on the starting-point of our thought. He raises a problem

of the first importance; he infects us with his feeling for it and convinces us of the rightness—because of the simplicity and directness—of his approach; he startles us by the daring of his solution, and he leaves us wanting to hear more. For these reasons *Reconciler* seems to me to provide remarkable evidence in favour of the general philosophy of religion that lies back of it—the philosophy, that is to say, of the *Fragment*.

In *Patmos*, the last great example of Hölderlin's poetic thinking (and of all his poetry), the development of his thought is not so brilliantly sustained as in the two earlier poems. Nevertheless, *Patmos* contains Hölderlin's fullest treatment of the problem of God's relation to Nature, and, closely connected with this, of what a "free man's worship" should be. The poem opens with impressive simplicity;

Ever near
Yet hard to grasp is God.

A later unfinished version gives a variant of this:

. . . Wholly good: yet never grasped by himself
Is God. . . .

Either version (the theology behind either opening) serves equally well to introduce the problem: what is to be made of the fact that the world *loses* God—that he seems, often, to forsake the world? The poem presents us with a series of pictures: the world which contained God in his supreme manifestation, Christ: the world in which Christ died but which was not because of this immediately God-forsaken; and lastly the world Hölderlin lived in, a world, as he saw it, without God. The eleventh stanza sums up this process, and the twelfth contains Hölderlin's attempt at a general explanation (but not justification) of it.

But when he dies
On whom
Beauty most hung, whose form
Was a miracle, that in Him
The gods were mirrored and yet
(An enigma to each) as they looked
They no longer distinguished each other . . .
. . . and when all
Has been carried away, the sand
And pastures, the temples spoiled
And His honour, and that of his friends,

Has been scattered away, and even
The most High has turned aside
His face, so that nothing
Divine can be seen in Heaven
Or on green earth—what is this?

It is the sower's throw, when he takes
The wheat in his shovel
And swings it over the thrashing floor up to the clear.
The chaff falls at his feet, but
The corn reaches the end.
Nor is it evil if some
Be lost—or the living sound
Of speech be silenced.
For God's work too is like ours:
He wills not all things at once.

The concluding lines seem to suggest a providential explanation. But Hölderlin sees that there is absolute loss, with no regaining, in the world. And it is this (or the appearance of it) which the conception of providence has generally been used to justify. In other words, any providential justification of the ways of God to men must justify his dealings *with* men. And this Hölderlin finds impossible—if not impious. Later in the poem, as we shall see, Hölderlin bitterly arraigns those who would like God to guide every movement of their fingers, and whose longing for God contains a "violence"—the very antithesis of the state of mind "raised above compulsion and need". What Hölderlin is anxious to do is to *exonerate* God or the gods from charges of negligence or evil. This is the purpose of the image of the "throw". It serves to bring out the waste involved in every natural process, from the basic economy of life, through the highest human achievements, to the very workings of God in and through Nature. God is here compared to a husbandman, and this humble metaphor seems more effective for bringing out the all-pervasive fact of waste than the traditional Greek metaphor of the artist or craftsman. (Yet one would not have to reflect for long to realize the waste involved in even the best artistic works—or lives.) By the very nature of the medium, so to speak, God has to work not only in and through but between the mutual frictions and interferences—the darker side of the "infinite variety"—of different parts of Nature. And it is for this reason that his work is like ours and that he does not will all things at once; and for this reason it is not evil "if some be lost or the living sound of speech be silenced".

No thinker, perhaps, has ever been more deeply impressed by the inevitability of this waste than Hölderlin. He is never tired of insisting on the narrowness of the limits within which anything

good, noble and truly human because truly religious can flourish. In this respect he might be described as a pessimist—because a realist. On the other hand, this realization never made Hölderlin doubt the worthwhileness of his devotion to God or the gods. To what purpose, indeed, should men, whose unworthiness is so patent, arraign the gods, who are essentially mysterious and whose manifestations alone make life worth living for men? Considered from this side Hölderlin's attitude has sometimes been described as optimistic. But the description is quite misplaced. Hölderlin's moral attitude is essentially a heroic one; and its heroism is at once religious, intellectual and humane. To the expression of this attitude he devoted his poetic gifts; and in doing so, he believed that he was exemplifying the highest task and duty of poetry. The last stanza of *Patmos*—his last fully coherent poetic testament—is remarkable not only as a statement of that task and duty but as Hölderlin's own summing-up of the main themes he had covered in his poetry.

Too long now, too long
Has the glory of the heavenly ones remained
Invisible: till now we demand
They must almost guide our fingers, and a violence
Shamefully enters our hearts.
But each god calls for sacrifice, and never
Has good been attained by neglecting
Any one of the gods.
We have worshipped our mother earth,
And more lately the light of the sun
In our ignorance: but the Father
Who rules over all, loves best
That the immutable word
Be respected, and all existing
Things be read truthfully.
For this lives German song.

In other more prophetic poems Hölderlin expresses his faith that through poetry (in particular German poetry) a new epoch in man's relation to Nature, and hence in the nature of Nature, is about to begin. Men will turn at the poet's cry, and be filled with that readiness to receive, to worship, and to suffer which the gods demand. The gods themselves will return, and all Nature will again be alive with divine life. Between men a truly human life will begin, and their speech will have a candour and simplicity at present known only to rare individuals in moments of love and worship. How cruelly has this part of Hölderlin's poetry been falsified by events! He has been a prophet of poetry as the "path to the gods", unheard for a century in his own country and, when

heard, shamelessly misused and dishonoured. Perhaps it is in the poems we have been considering—those in which Hölderlin the thinker speaks so clearly and yet so passionately—that the width and humanity of his message can most easily be appreciated: especially by English readers.

W. B. GALLIE.

NEWMAN AND GERMAN CATHOLICISM

By PAUL SIMON

MR. BIRRELL in an essay on Cardinal Newman points out that certain names in history are inseparably and exclusively linked with certain movements, while other names recall the memory of certain places. In Newman, however, the name is associated for ever with a movement as well as a place, Oxford.

What significance has or had the name of Newman for Catholic Germany? Newman's life lasted almost a century and he had to deal during his lifetime with all the intellectual currents of the nineteenth century. He was a child at the time when the sovereign Archbishops still ruled their little principalities in Germany and when the intellectual centres of Catholicism were still confined to purely Catholic parts of the world. Kant was still living when he was born and Goethe stood at the climax of his life. When he died Wilhelm II was reigning in Germany. In the German Reich all denominations enjoyed equal rights. A number of theological faculties of considerable significance and reputation were established at the universities. In the realm of intellect, however, Materialism held sway. It is difficult to describe the relation of Newman and his world of ideas to German Catholicism. Were these relations defined by personal meetings and by sympathies, or did Newman's world of ideas influence German Catholic theology directly?

The Oxford Movement is dated from 14 July, 1833, the day on which Keble preached his sermon on "National Apostasy" against the State's invasion of the Church. At the same time the struggle began between Church and State in Prussia, at first in the controversy about mixed marriages. The dispute between these two powers which has shaped the West had been silent in Germany since the Reformation. The Protestant provinces had removed this antagonism. On the other hand the difficulties were mitigated in

Catholic countries through the influence of the Holy See. Supreme authority of the King over the Church had been established in England by the Reformation. Hence there was a certain analogy between Germany and England. The Oxford Movement aroused the sense of independence in the Church and took up the fight against the conception of omnipotence of the State at the same time that the crisis arose in the Catholic provinces of Prussia. At that time in Germany there was a powerful theological movement aiming at a religious revival and on parallel lines with the general Romantic tendencies of the age. The centres of this movement were Tübingen and Munich and to some extent also Münster. The inner strength of this movement expanded also into Northern Germany, though it was restrained there by the political situation. Newman's activity reached its climax in the decade from 1833 to 1844, though there was no relation of any significance to Germany in this epoch. One of his latest biographers underlines as a striking feature of his character his insularity and emphasizes that he knew practically nothing of the great French or German contemporary writers. He quotes Stanley saying: "How very different would the development of the Church of England have been if Newman had been able to read German." But, as Frank Leslie Cross retorts, it is frequently overlooked that the mere knowledge of German language and German theology would not have transformed Newman into a Stanley (Cross, p. 49). It was not until 1884—that is to say at the age of 83—that he read anything by Kant. And yet it is not quite true to say that Newman was altogether ignorant of German thought. Newman's friend Pusey had been living in Germany for a long time before he played his important role in the Oxford Movement, and he had studied not only in Göttingen but also in Berlin and Grifswald and knew not only the men of Göttingen but also Tholuk, Schleiermacher, Neander and finally Hengstenberg, two years his junior, who was lecturing on the Old Testament. Hengstenberg was on very good terms with Pusey. He bought books for him and was anxious to keep him in touch with German writings. At the request of Hengstenberg Pusey tried to interest Newman in the *Evangelische Kirchenzeitung* which Hengstenberg was editing (*Life of Pusey*, I, p. 86). Rose, another important member of the Oxford Movement who came from Cambridge, had also studied in Germany. While Pusey at first looked favourably on German theology Rose held the opinion that the Protestant Church in Germany was a mere shadow of her name. He characterized Protestantism as an abolition of Christianity and maintained that this abolition was not confined to the Lutherans and Calvinists. German Protestantism meant in his opinion actually a denial of everything that had been understood by Christendom up to that

time. Rose had read four papers on the situation of German Protestantism in 1826, which later were published in print on the request of some influential theologians. This book was translated into German in 1926 and aroused great sensation and indignation in Germany. Rose was then editing the *British Magazine* and had great influence on Pusey when the latter changed his opinion of German theology. Hence it may be assumed that Newman had some knowledge of German Protestant theology, though it seems true that he was ignorant of German Catholic literature.

He did not know either Möhler or Hirscher. The relations between England and Southern Germany were not very close in those days. In Möhler's *Symbolik*, and above all in his book on the unity of the Church or the principles of Catholicism, Newman would have found a remarkable corroboration of his own opinion. German Catholic theology had established some relations with Paris and French intellectual life through Romanticism. But to whom could they apply in England, where the Catholic Church just existed and Catholic theology of any significance was not to be seen? Anglican and Catholic theology had hardly any relation to each other. Conceptions of thought in France or England meant different things to Catholics and to Anglicans. In France the struggle was fought for Liberalism while at the same time the theologians in Oxford, who tended towards the Catholic Church, struggled against Liberalism; and yet they both believed in the selfsame truth and fought for the same ideals. German Catholics heard the news from Oxford about Newman's conversion, and the Catholic centre of Munich was the first to establish relations with Oxford. Thus on 18 October, 1847, shortly after his conversion, Newman on his journey back from Rome came to see Döllinger in Munich. At that time Döllinger was playing a great role in the struggle of Catholicism in Germany. Hence the two men kept up their association particularly when Newman became more intimate with Sir John Acton, Döllinger's disciple. Acton and Döllinger paid several visits to Newman in 1858 and discussed the important problem of the relation of systematic theology to history. This question was near to Newman's heart. The history of dogma was still in its initial stages at that time and the writings of the Fathers were not yet explored sufficiently. There was no discussion yet on the early forms of Sacraments nor on the constitution of the Church in the Apostolic age. Nor was there any controversy apparent between history and dogma. Newman highly appreciated Döllinger and held the opinion that his historical studies deserved to be translated into English. In 1857 he approached Döllinger suggesting an English translation of his book *Judentum und Heidentum*. Döllinger in turn had great respect for Newman, considered him the greatest authority on the history

of early Christianity, and authorized Newman to have the book *Judentum und Heidentum* translated into English. In his letter dealing with this matter Döllinger very cordially expressed his appreciation of Newman's theological writings. He had read Newman's book on justification twice and considered it one of the best theological studies of the century. He also declared that Newman's book on Arianism had lasting value. He then went on: "Forgive my saying so—but you did fail after having become a member of and honour to the true Church to give us a book of the same theological weight and significance! I trust, however, you will do so before long." The relations between Newman and Döllinger remained unchanged and very friendly for almost two generations; they were not confined to a regular exchange of thoughts but led to a real collaboration. This friendship for Döllinger was significant of Newman's sympathy for a courageous and optimistic kind of Catholicism open to the world. Newman wished Döllinger with a few other men to join a kind of board of editors of the *Rambler*. This fact shows how intimate the friendship had been between the two men. Newman at that time was involved in a controversy and the *Rambler* was one phase in this struggle, whose point was to establish a scientific representation of Catholicism in England and to show that freedom of science and conscience are appreciated in Catholicism. Döllinger found himself in a similar position. He was anxious to demonstrate in Germany that Catholicism does not despise science but on the contrary does in fact support and promote it. Strangely enough this movement appeared in Germany as some sort of Liberalism as Newman likewise could not escape the charge of being a Liberal Catholic. Lacordaire and Montalembert were friends of this Liberalism and they fought at the same time for political freedom and for the freedom of the Church. In Germany, however, Liberalism had a different accent. The significance of the fight was not only political freedom but also freedom of science, and within Catholic science the renewal of Catholic theology. In order to understand this, we must bear in mind that a vigorous reaction against all liberal ideas had started in the different German countries after the Peace of Vienna. In some of the German principalities absolutism was re-established and all freedom movement suppressed. The well-known book by de Maistre, *Du Pape* (said to be the source of Ultramontanism), proclaimed the Pope to be the stronghold and bulwark against all revolutions and revolutionary libertinism. De Lamennais in *Avenir* appealed for freedom of thought and conscience and at the same time was a valiant champion of Papal rights. In all countries the fight for freedom was upheld by the noblest characters and appeared at the same time to be a fight for the Church. To Pope Gregory XVI, however, who had condemned Lamennais, the mere word freedom

meant revolution. Pius IX, his successor, was welcomed with enthusiasm as the Liberal Pope. But his love of freedom did not survive the failure of his efforts in Italy in 1848. Hence began the fight against liberal principles in Rome which, in Pius IX's mind, were inseparably associated with the events of 1848. The age of historical science was dawning and history was bound to raise its problems and queries also within the Church and theology. Henceforward there exists a certain tension in European Catholicism, particularly in Germany and England. While Liberalism and Ultramontanism (to use these labels for once) at first joined hands in France, the spirits divided after 1848; one section looked for a reconciliation with modern evolution and with the historical modes of thought while the others refused any kind of appeasement. They declared war on the modern world with its historical method including the political ideals and intellectual movements, while the others were convinced that science and research guided by true love for truth cannot counteract the Gospel. While the idea of a reconciliation of Catholic faith with the modern world inspired many men in Germany, Scholasticism revived in Rome. Döllinger was an Ultramontane and had no reputation among Catholics as a liberal. But he was mainly concerned with history. He had done outstanding work on this subject but he was ignorant of Scholasticism. Hence, as the head of the historical school, he wrestled with the problem as to how modern thought could be reconciled with Catholicism, or more in detail, how dogma could live at peace with history, how the permanent search for truth and the ever-flowing current of intellectual evolution could harmonize with the truth established once and for ever in dogma. The position of theology was extremely difficult in Germany since it moved within a milieu of universities which were not Catholic, even in Catholic provinces like Bavaria. Catholic scientists and scholars were continually surrounded by "free" sciences and in permanent touch with them. They could not isolate themselves, but were always compelled to apply the standard of their opponents to their own thought or to allow it to be applied by the others. Should not the Church possess the vitality to proclaim the Good News also in and for the modern age? The much admired Lacordaire did his best to show in his sermons the width and openness of Catholicism, and demonstrated that the Gospel was indeed established for all ages and was sufficiently wide to permeate modern science. He was firmly convinced that in the end Church and Gospel would be victorious, not by seclusion, but by their hospitality.

The universities of Munich and Bonn had been founded after the Congress of Vienna, and Catholic and Protestant scholars came to meet each other for the first time within the same universities.

The new German Reich had become interdenominational and comprised several creeds. While the discussions had been carried on up to that time from different denominational districts and, as it were, from different fortified positions, the opponents had to face each other suddenly in the same room and could not evade each other. The first encounters were unpleasant and acrimonious. One has only to remember how high the feelings ran over Möhler's *Symbolik*. How differently would a book of such depth and moderation be received today. But this was just the problem, confronted by Möhler, how far historical development and historical research on the one hand and Catholic Faith on the other are in harmony. It was this question that attracted Newman all his life. He was concerned with it in his lectures on the idea of a university in Dublin; how far Catholic traditions and loyalties, to which Catholics cling without any dogmatic formulation, might need some revision with regard to modern sciences. How was it possible to enable Catholics to meet modern science in intellectual freedom and while retaining their loyalties, yet earn the respect of the learned men as the true representatives of science? In Germany two schools of thought were represented in two periodicals, the one called *Der Catholik* and the other *Tübingen Quartalschrift*. The historical school celebrated a triumph when a congress of Catholic scholars and scientists was held in Munich on the invitation of Döllinger and Haneberg. The Pope sent his blessing. The Archbishop of Bamberg and the Bishop of Augsburg were present. Döllinger took the chair and in his speech outlined a programme of Catholic science. Though paying high tribute to Scholasticism for its achievements in the Middle Ages he stressed the point that it was no longer adequate to the modern age. The systems of the schoolmen originated from an age when no historical or Biblical science existed. Meanwhile, however, since the Reformation progress had been made in subjects unknown to the schoolmen. Hence the question must be raised of accommodating theology to the modern age. Scholasticism, Döllinger maintained, was too narrowly limited by its Aristotelianism to provide the foundation for the whole edifice of the theological doctrine. The Catholic doctrine is to be presented in organic fullness, in its implication with religious life and with a strong emphasis upon what is essential and immutable for ever, as clearly distinct from what the ages have added in the historical evolution. Catholics had also to recognize what the communities detached from the Church had preserved of truth. Hypotheses and opinions are bound to change with the progress of science, but defined dogma will last. But defined dogma must also be permeated and explained over again by the disinterested intellect. Purely mechanical repetition and explanation will do more harm than good. The modern watch-

word has to be: Evolution expressed both by modification of opinions and by a deepening of the knowledge of true dogmatic contents. Particularly those men are to be opposed who would recur to the authority of dogma in defending their own doctrinaire opinions. Döllinger's speech was moderate and could have been accepted by most of the audience. But there were also extremists who accentuated this word and that and interpreted them in a sense which was bound to provoke disappointment in Rome. Nobody of course could take exception to his wish to revive theological science. But he was considered to have failed to emphasize authority while insisting on the need of Catholic science. Döllinger's adversaries held the view that he had forgotten that theological science was not free in the sense in which Protestants understand freedom. Rome could not and never would abandon the great tradition of the Fathers of the Church nor the great tradition of mediaeval Scholasticism. There were indeed theological opinions of particular weight which, though not dogma, yet have an authority that cannot be disregarded. Döllinger's address in Munich seemed to many people an attack on traditions and loyalties which have been kept up for centuries and could not be overthrown in a moment by some historical school in Germany. The English periodical *Home and Foreign Review*, with which Newman was connected, gave high praise to Döllinger's speech (certainly not without Newman's consent), and even went so far as to see in this lecture "a turning point of the history of the Church". This programme, they said, would not only apply in Germany but to all Catholic science, and if it was successful would benefit the whole of the Catholic world.

This tribute was among the reasons for the condemnation of the speech. In a letter addressed to the Archbishop of Munich, Pope Pius IX, while paying tribute to the intentions of the Congress, emphasized the significance of Scholastic theology and of the Roman Congregations whose authority would also apply to scholars and scientists. This letter was commonly considered as a condemnation of the interpretation of Döllinger's speech in the *Home and Foreign Review*. The editors consequently discontinued the publication of the paper in order to declare their submission. Newman expressed his regret at the disappearance of the magazine. Though he was perfectly ready, as he emphasized, to accept the letter of Pope Pius IX, he was afraid that some passages of it could be misinterpreted. As always he cared only for the whole, and in his moderate and resolute way disliked one-sided opposition which might benefit from the letter. From an analysis of this letter he drew certain conclusions for himself and thought that the implications of this letter made it impossible for him as a Catholic writer to deal with controversial problems implied in positive science. This attitude

is characteristic of Newman; it is the expression of his religious and philosophical conviction. Never losing sight of the whole, he is anxious to avoid everything that would increase the disintegration of this world, and to respect always the opinion of every individual person. He wished to strengthen this opinion also in Germany. Hence he considered a method wrong which too bluntly emphasized a doctrine the modern world was still unable to grasp.

In the controversy on infallibility Newman at first doubtless sided with Döllinger. He watched attentively and with keenest interest the trend of events in Rome and in Germany, and he never concealed his opinion that the declaration of infallibility would be inopportune. He could add that he had always believed in infallibility, and later in a letter he recalled sentences of his earlier writing from which he could conclude that he had always believed in the infallibility not only of the Church but also of Her Supreme Shepherd. But he felt more strongly than all the others how difficult it would be for the modern age to put up with this dogma. He saw great difficulties in the unsolved historical and Biblical problems. On the one side progressive science was thrusting ahead, and on the other side an anxious concern regarded science only as an enemy. But when eventually Döllinger refused to submit, Newman did not join hands with him. He deeply regretted the event, and would have done his utmost to reconcile Döllinger with the Church.

The situation in Germany had essentially changed meanwhile. That kind of stagnation in intellectual life which was apparent everywhere was also to be felt in the field of theology after 1870. The age of the great theologians of the Romantic period had passed; evangelical theology seemed immersed completely in rationalism and Biblical philology, while Catholic theology was confined to narrow apologetics and to an intransigent dislike of science. Economic prosperity and political evolution in the German Reich were followed by a widespread growth of materialism.

Catholicism made its appearance in Germany more and more as a political factor, and its spiritual forces seemed to be buried. When Cardinal Newman died in 1890 an obituary was published in *Die deutsche Rundschau* by F. X. Kraus and Lady Blennerhasset, which expressed both outstanding admiration for Newman and an intimate knowledge of his life and work. But what did the news of his death mean to German Catholics in general? The influence of the late Cardinal—though considerable on a few individual persons—was never so widespread as the greatness of his personality deserved. His *Apologia*, which had made him suddenly the most famous author of his age in England, had been published in a German version shortly after its appearance in England. But what effect could be expected from it in the Germany of 1865? His

lectures on the idea of a university were translated into the German language in 1858, and so were his religious lectures which were published by Schündelen as early as 1851.

When the new century dawned and the Cardinal's body had been ten years in its grave, Newman's hour struck in Germany. It was the period of the Modernist controversy. There was no such Modernism in Germany as was rampant in France; but this was only because great systematic theology was lacking in Germany, or at least was represented only by a very few theologians at certain universities. Certain problems, however, became topical in Germany too, since Catholicism had to face a vigorous Protestant science. Since this science was almost exclusively history it was the more difficult for Catholic science to stand its ground as theology. The old problems, history facing dogma, emerged once more. Can a Catholic be a scientist at all? This was the query discussed not only within academic circles, but also in the papers and by the public. It was not by chance that Newman became known in Germany when the Encyclical on Modernism appeared, and many Germans questioned the ability of Catholicism to influence the modern world. Widespread interest in Newman's works awoke. The publication of German versions of all his books was generally demanded. In the beginning of the twentieth century a book, *John Henry Newman*, by Lady Blennerhasset was published, which was the first important biography of Newman in Germany. But Newman's influence cannot be ascribed to a single book. Newman was never a specialist, either as a theologian, or as a philosopher, and he never created a theological or philosophical system. Fr. Przwara, S.J., tried to summarize Newman's world of ideas by compiling excerpts and significant passages and to represent them in a systematic order. A similar attempt was made by an Italian Dominican. But Newman was no systematist: he was not a scholar, but he was much more. He was a prophet and an apostle, and the professors of the universities and representatives of theological doctrines were never eager to listen to prophets and apostles. Newman wrote theology, philosophy, history, novels and poems, and did it all in order to help modern men searching for God in the turmoil of this age. He knew the needs of modern men and saw them heading towards catastrophe.

Newman is a signpost in the present situation in Germany. Will the true and eternal words rule once more over the mind of Germany? Dostojevski's sentence which reduces the catastrophe of our age to a simple formula does not apply to Germany alone. He says: "The question is simply which is more beautiful—Shakespeare or a pair of boots, a picture of Raphael or oil?" Not only Germany but the whole of the world apparently prefers oil, and Germany has been chosen by Providence to demonstrate to the world the

effect of this choice. All depends now upon whether the world grasps the lesson. The test whether the lesson was really understood in Germany will be found in the relationship of all those who still possess the Apostolic Creed and the Our Father as a common property. Who could be better an example and a teacher for us than Newman, who in all his faithfulness never lost the respect for another's opinion?

PAUL SIMON.

OTTO III AND THE RENOVATIO IMPERII

HIS NEGLECTED SYNTHESIS FOR EUROPE

by R. ARNOLD JONES

THE Emperor Otto III is, on the whole, a neglected and underrated figure. Until quite recently the works of English historians were coloured by the sympathy for all things German so prevalent in the universities. Thus we find in all the thirteen hundred pages of H. A. L. Fisher's *History of Europe* only one casual reference to him in connection with the Papacy. Tout, whose work appeared significantly enough in the heyday of German influence before the last war, says of him, "At best, he was the first of that long line of brilliant and attractive failures which it was the special mission of the mediaeval Empire to produce."* Bryce, it is true, somewhat shifts the emphasis by calling his reign "short, sad, full of bright promise never fulfilled",† but in spite of this, and of a long and detailed passage devoted to the Emperor, he shows no understanding of the statesmanship of his policy. Even in our own day the trappings command more attention, generally for the purposes of mild ridicule, than the essentials of his political aims, and Mr. D. C. Douglas can write in a way rather typical of a previous epoch: "This fascinating man, a scholar, a dreamer, and a pure theorist, was wholly unfitted to rule the disorderly realm which he had inherited. He was completely involved in the dreams of the past and lost to the circumstances of the present. Forgetful where his real power lay, he spent his time in Italy. Glad in the robes of the Caesars, he imitated imperial dignities and ceremonies. He gazed, it is said, on the embalmed corpse of Charlemagne. He

* Tout, *The Empire and the Papacy*, 1908.

† Bryce, *The Holy Roman Empire*.

dreamed of ruling over an Empire which had in fact passed away.”* And so on. There is in all this no recognition that attention to outward display does not necessarily preclude the existence of a sound and even deeply penetrating conception behind it. It has been left to Mr. Christopher Dawson to emphasize his true importance in history for English readers. But on the whole Otto's ideals have received most justice from Slav historians. The Polish Professor Halecki called him “that great Christian Emperor”, and speaks of his “idealistic and generous conception” of “the imperial power and its universal mission”.† The Czech historian, Professor Dvornik, who is unrivalled for the boldness of his historical conceptions and the depth of his scholarship, has in a short work given some foreshadowing of what may be expected from his projected history of the origins of Eastern and Central Europe; after a long passage analysing the Emperor's aims, he concludes: “Otto's conception offered the only possible policy for Germany to secure cultural and political supremacy in Central and Eastern Europe without prejudice to the national growth and political future of these young nations.”‡

Otto's policy, then, cannot be lightly dismissed as that of a fantastic dreamer: it is worth study. First, however, it is necessary to grasp the context of his time and place in order to understand his approach to the chief problems of his day. One of these, the perennial question of the relation of Church and State, was further complicated by the fact that the Papacy was just recovering from what had been perhaps its lowest ebb. Otto's contribution to its recovery has, on the whole, received adequate recognition. But his solution of the second great problem of his day, a purely political one, namely the relations between Germans and Slavs, has been generally derided or ignored in one of two ways, either totally or by focussing attention upon trivialities. The origins of the *Drang Nach Osten* must therefore be briefly analysed.

For a long time, as a result of German theories, it was believed that the Slav race originated in the Pripet marshes, and it was therefore imagined as a suitably degraded and uncultured stock whose whole mission in life was (obviously) to serve the *Herrenvolk*. Unfortunately for this theory, it has now been established that the first home of the Slavs lay between the Elbe, the Oder and the Vistula, and that they were in all probability possessed of a high culture. From this area Slav tribes moved into what is now the Ukraine, about 1000 B.C., and in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. they invaded the Balkans. The Slavs nearest Constantinople were

* *European Civilization*, Vol. III.

† Halecki, *The History of Poland*.

‡ Dvornik, *The First Wave of the Drang Nach Osten* (Cambridge Historical Journal, 1943).

naturally the first to accept Christianity, and by the accident of geography the tribes in the original home of the race were the last. Meanwhile the Germans had been forcibly converted by Charlemagne and from this circumstance laboured under the delusion that the sword was the most successful apostle of the Gospel. It was the Saxons, the most savage of the German tribes, the last to be baptized and the one least affected by the Carolingian tradition, who began the *Drang Nach Osten*. Their duke, Henry the Fowler, had been elected King of the Germans in 919, after the death of Conrad I in the previous year had ended the Franconian line. Some of his subjects—those in the marshes and moors—were still formally heathen, and he himself was suspicious of the Church, refusing the crowning and anointing which it offered him. He it was who turned back the Magyars, but unfortunately, once set upon the road of military glory, he did not remain content with repulsing the invaders but instead turned his armies against the neighbouring Danes and Slavs. In 928 he crossed the Elbe and thus began the first of the perennial Germanic invasions of the Slavonic East. He traversed the marshes of the Havel, and captured Brunabor, the chief town of the Hevelians, which became the nucleus for the future Brandenburg Mark.

There followed the conquest of the Veletians, also called Ljutizi or Wilzi, a powerful confederation of Slavonic tribes settled between the middle course of the Elbe, the Oder and the Baltic Sea, who were given no choice but to pay tribute, the same fate overtaking the Obodrites and those Slavonic tribes whose home lay between the lower course of the Elbe and the Baltic Sea, or modern Schleswig-Holstein.* More important than the exaction of tribute was the settlement of German colonists. "So anxious was he (Henry) to utilize all the available forces against the enemy, that he settled a legion of able-bodied robbers at Mersburg."†

Henry's successor, Otto the Great, entrusted the organization of the frontier to Hermann Billung and the notorious and falsely titled "Margrave" Gero, "who by the most ruthless methods succeeded in extending German power as far as the rivers Neisse and Boder". Yet this plain and obvious aggression by the Germans has been interpreted as if the Slavs were the attackers. Tout says in a self-contradictory sentence: "By their strenuous exertions the Slavs were for the time driven away from German territory, and German rule was extended as far as the Oder." A little further on comes a further contradiction. "Never since the days of Charles the Great," we read, "had the north seen so great an extension of religion and culture"; yet on the next page Tout writes: "The

* Dvornik, op. cit.

† Tout, op. cit.

Saxon chieftains—half-heathens themselves—did their very best to prevent the Christianization of the Wends"* (as the Germans called the Slav tribes)! Missionary zeal was, in fact, only an excuse for conquest and not the real aim of the Germans at all. In the same way an attempt was made to subject the newly conquered regions permanently to German influence by making them dependent on the Archbishopric of Magdeburg. This, in the end, however, fortunately came to nothing.

Up to now the Germans had been confronted by disunited tribes which did not possess any State organization properly so called. But in the meanwhile a confederation of Slavonic tribes had been formed with the centre of its authority at Gniezno. It had developed beyond the most rudimentary tribal stage, for its Duke Mieszko "was reported to command a standing army of 3000 well-armed men, who were paid in minted money".† But an even greater blow was dealt to German aspirations when the ruler of this State, the nucleus of the future Polish kingdom, accepted baptism after his marriage to the Czech Princess Dubravka and encouraged Czech missionaries to come to his realm. Thus at a stroke he removed the chief excuse for German expansion eastwards. Furthermore, he persuaded Pope John XIII to reverse the effects of the Bull his predecessor had issued in 962 giving the Archbishop of Magdeburg jurisdiction over Slav territory; the Poles were given a bishop of their own under the See of Rome.

German expansion was soon to suffer another heavy blow. To quote Professor Dvornik once more: "When the news reached the Elbe that Otto II had been defeated by the Arabs in the disastrous battle of Calabria and had died the following year, all the conquered tribes, from the north of the Elbe and the Danish border to the Oder, combined in a formidable revolt, which like a mighty whirlwind swept all before it. 983 is still a black year in the German annals and one of the most disastrous in the history of Germany. The infuriated Slavs plundered Hamburg, which was captured by the Christian Duke of the Obodrites, sacked Havelberg, razed Zeitz to the ground and destroyed Brandenburg. After a number of bloody engagements, the Margraves' armies routed the rebels, without being able completely to subdue them."‡ This revolt was a more serious and effective matter than the previous Slav risings, such as those Henry the Fowler had suppressed in 929 and 932. It definitely brought to an end the first phase of the *Drang Nach Osten*, and it was not resumed until the latter half of the twelfth century. "Then it was that the new German colonists beheld with dismay, as the chronicler Helmold has it, the ruins of the first colonizing and Germanizing attempts, the destroyed cities over-

* Tout, op. cit.

† Dvornik, op. cit.

‡ Dvornik, op. cit.

grown by huge forests, the wild undergrowth covering the last traces of furrows made by their predecessors."*

This, then, was the situation confronting Otto III and his advisers when his reign began. He was only a child of four in 983 and he died in 1002. Considering how few years of comparatively adult life were allotted to him, his political conceptions are surprising in their moderation and depth. His ancestry to some extent explains his ideals. His father was, of course, Otto II and his mother Theophano, the daughter of the Byzantine Emperor Romanus II, and their child, as Mr. Dawson has put it, therefore "united in his person the twofold tradition of the Christian Empire in its Carolingian and Byzantine forms".† In youth he received the influence of Byzantine culture from the Calabrian Greek Philagathas and the tradition of the West from Bernward of Hildesheim, the future Saint from whom also he became infected with enthusiasm for the Cluniac reforms. "He was intensely sensitive to the higher spiritual influences of the time as we see from his personal friendship with St. Adalbert of Prague, and his relations with the leading ascetics of Italy, St. Romuald and St. Nilus."‡ In the early stages of his reign the Byzantine tradition exercised a predominant influence, which never wholly left him. Indeed the Byzantine trappings with which he surrounded himself—the Greek names of his Court officials, Protovestiarius for chamberlain, Logothetes for counsellor and so on, the changes in Court etiquette from the barbarous simplicity of the Saxon dukes to the complicated ceremonial of Byzantium—have aroused the derision of historians. But, as Mr. Dawson has pointed out, "the Byzantine element in Otto's Court was not due to an artificial imitation of exotic ceremonial, as some modern historians have supposed. It was the natural result of the semi-Byzantine tradition of tenth-century Rome and of the Empire itself. Thus Charles the Bald appeared in Byzantine dress at the assembly of Ponthion in 876 as a sign that he had received the imperial crown."§ In Otto's case, moreover, the new outward circumstances symbolized a new conception of the nature of the Imperial office, which he intended to restore from the narrow influences of a purely Germanic outlook to its old universal connotation. "With such a character and such an upbringing," says Mr. Dawson, "it is not surprising that Otto III should have conceived an imperialism that was Byzantine rather than Germanic."||

One of his first acts upon attaining his legal majority led directly towards a reform of the Papacy. In 996 he crossed the Alps to seek his coronation at Rome. On his way he was met with the news of the death of the Pope, John XV, and with the request of the Roman

* Dvornik, *op. cit.*

† Dawson, *op. cit.*

‡ Christopher Dawson, *The Making of Europe.*

§ *Op. cit.*

|| *Op. cit.*

clergy that he should nominate the new Pontiff. He thereupon freed Rome from the Crescentii who had for years exercised a baneful influence upon the Papacy and appointed his cousin Bruno Pope as Gregory V. For Otto had determined to establish the partnership of Pope and Emperor which was to remain the ideal, however rarely realized, of the Middle Ages. But it was not Bruno who was destined to co-operate with Otto in achieving his chief aims, but the great scholar Gerbert of Aurillac, Archbishop first of Reims and then of Ravenna, who had imbibed the knowledge of mathematics possessed by the Arabs of Spain as well as the more conventional learning of the day. It was he who persuaded Otto of the value of the Western tradition. "Let it not be taught in Italy," he wrote, "that Greece alone can boast of the Roman power and of the philosophy of its Emperor. Ours, yea ours, is the Roman Empire. Its strength rests on fruitful Italy and populous Gaul and Germany and the valiant kingdoms of the Scythians. Our Augustus art thou, O Caesar, the emperor of the Romans who, sprung of the noblest blood of the Greeks, surpasses the Greeks in power, controls the Romans by right of inheritance and overcomes both alike in wisdom and eloquence."* When Bruno died in the year 1000, Gerbert, "the most learned and brilliant scholar of the Age",† was therefore appointed Pope. He took as his title, significantly enough, that of Sylvester II. Sylvester I was, of course, the Pope of Constantine's time, and the intention of Pope and Emperor to emulate their predecessors was thus symbolized.

Otto had determined to revive the Empire as something Roman and universal and not simply as a sort of glorified German kingdom. Consequently he spent much of his time at Rome itself, building a palace upon the Aventine. To emphasize the Christian character of his office he called himself "Servant of the Apostles" and "Servant of Jesus Christ"—titles which are to modern ears more Papal than imperial. This is not surprising, so close was the co-operation between the two Powers. Tout insists that harmony between them "could only be secured by the Emperor's utter subordination of his real interests to the pursuit of his brilliant but illusive fancies".‡ By "subordination of his real interests" Tout presumably means that Otto wished to be something more than a magnified Duke of Saxony and to rise above a purely German outlook. It is this prejudice which has made historians ridicule Otto's Byzantine tastes and his wish to restore the Roman Empire, the *Renovatio Imperii Romanorum*, as his seal was inscribed. But the new glorification of the Emperor's person meant a new policy, one based far more upon the Christian conception of human and racial equality than

* *Lettres de Gerbert*, quoted Dawson.

‡ Op. cit.

† Dawson, op. cit.

that of his forebears. The Germans were no longer the favoured nation; at best they were now merely *primus inter pares* among the peoples of the Empire, and even this style Otto himself would undoubtedly have reserved for the inhabitants of Rome itself. No longer did the Emperor pursue a policy of Germanic conquest and expansion, but one of spreading Christianity by means more in accord with the spirit of the Gospel than the threat of fire and sword.

This, indeed, is the crux of Otto's policy: his attitude to the Slavs. The revolt of 983 had made the old method of extermination and enslavement temporarily impossible, and in any case it was not one which accorded with the Emperor's conception of the Imperial office: the Slavs were to him just as much a people of the Empire as the Germans. Christendom was now conceived, as Mr. Dawson has well put it, "as a society of free peoples under the presidency of the Roman Pope and Emperor".* This led Otto to the most important political acts of his reign. His strong religious convictions made him as anxious as any of his forebears to encourage missionary activity among the pagan peoples of Eastern Europe, but he, as Professor Dvornik has said, "had the true notion of Christianization".† In order to convert the Slavs on the Elbe and the Baltic, he formed an alliance with the Polish Duke Boleslas the Brave, the son of Mieszko, and joined with him in founding a missionary centre near Ravenna, under the direction of St. Romuald, to which some Polish recruits were sent; another was established in Rome in the Monastery in which had lived St. Adalbert of Prague, in many ways the inspirer of the whole conception; and yet a third in Gniezno.

In 1000 Pope and Emperor joined in recognizing St. Stephen as King of Hungary, and at the same time an archbishopric was established at Gran, thus making the Hungarian Church independent of any ecclesiastical authority but that of Rome, and thereby excluding German influence. In this year, too, Otto III visited his new ally Boleslas the Brave in his capital of Gniezno. "What attracted Otto III, that great Christian Emperor, to Gniezno," writes Professor Halecki, "was the desire to visit the tomb of Adalbert, formerly Bishop of Prague, who, encouraged by Boleslas, had departed to preach the Faith to the Prussians, and had recently met a martyr's death among them. St. Bruno also, who was German, but who reproached Henry II for his alliance with Pagans against Poland, found in the Court of Boleslas a starting-point and support for his missionary activities, which reached even the Petchenegs and finished with his death in the borderlands of Lithuania and Ruthenia".‡ Boleslas, in fact, shared

* Op. cit.

† Op. cit.

‡ Halecki, op. cit.

the ideals of Otto and Sylvester and foreshadowed the union of Krewo, by which a later Polish sovereign brought about the conversion of Lithuania; he was therefore a fit partner in their work. The Polish duke received Otto as Emperor and head of Christendom, and in return the Emperor issued the famous "Act of Gniezno". By it the See of Gniezno became an archbishopric and Boleslas himself was granted the title of Patricius in the revived Empire. Otto, in the words of Professor Halecki, "did not hesitate to place his own crown on the head of Boleslas and to present him with the lance of St. Maurice, a symbol of royalty".* Unfortunately this collaboration between Poland and the Empire was terminated with Otto's death and its practical results are therefore in some ways small. But even in these few years a momentous and irrevocable step had been taken. The Hungarian as well as the Polish Church had been freed from their dependence on Germany and they now possessed their own ecclesiastical organization, "the indispensable condition for the independence of their national cultures".† This in itself would justify Otto's policy.‡ But the further consideration arises that it would undoubtedly have been far more fruitful had it been continued. The Slav tribes which were still pagan would have accepted Christianity more readily once the German menace was removed and with it the threat of invasion, slaughter and enslavement. In fact, however, Otto's policy was abandoned by his successor Henry II, who reverted to the old German outlook and even allied himself with the pagan Slavs against Poland. As a result the work of converting the Prussians was eventually left to the Teutonic Knights, who accomplished it by exterminating the tribe in question. It cannot seriously be pretended that this is an improvement on Otto's policy.

It was even more important in its effects culturally than politically. "Otto's policy," says Mr. Dawson, "... marks the emergence of a new European consciousness. All the forces that went to make up the unity of mediaeval Europe are represented in it—the Byzantine and Carolingian traditions of the Christian Empire and the ecclesiastical universalism of the Papacy, the spiritual ideals of the monastic reformers, such as St. Nilus and St. Romuald, and the missionary spirit of St. Adalbert, the Carolingian humanism of Gerbert, and the national devotion of Italians like Leo of Vercelli to the Roman idea. Thus it marks the point at which the traditions

* Op. cit.

† Dawson, op. cit.

‡ Professor Dvornik writes: "After a minute examination of the facts, I have come to the conclusion that the scheme was not so naive and hopeless as German historians have generally considered it to be. It was a serious endeavour to realize the mediaeval ideal of government—the complete accord of two Powers, the Pope acting in common with the Emperor and leaving to him the execution of whatever they decided between them" (op. cit.).

of the past age flow together and are merged in the new culture of the mediaeval West. It looks back to St. Augustine and Justinian, and forward to Dante and the Renaissance. It is true that Otto III's ideal of the Empire as a commonwealth of Christian peoples governed by the concordant and interdependent authorities of Emperor and Pope was never destined to be realized in practice; nevertheless, it preserved a kind of ideal existence like that of a Platonic form, which was continually seeking to attain material realization in the life of mediaeval society. For the ideal of Otto III is precisely the same ideal that was to inspire the thought of Dante, and throughout in intervening centuries it provided an intelligible formula in which the cultural unity of mediaeval Europe found conscious expression."*

We may take as a symbol of the cultural and political achievement of his reign the picture of Otto III receiving the homage of the peoples of the Empire. This masterpiece, which illustrates the Emperor's Gospels, was produced by the school of Reichenau about A.D. 1000, Otto's *annus mirabilis*, the year of Gerbert's election to the Papacy and the new policy to the recently converted peoples of Eastern Europe, which received its formal expression in the Act of Gniezno. As a work of art it shows a marked advance in technique from that of the Carolingian period. Compare it, for example, with the rather similar miniature of the Emperor Lothair in his Gospels:† the affinity is obvious, and the greater work of the two equally so. Otto is seated upon his throne, bearing the orb and sceptre, and flanked on either side by representatives of Church and State, while in a panel on the left the peoples of the Empire, figures representing Rome, Gaul, Germany and "Slavinia", are paying homage. "Contemporary Byzantium has nothing greater. The pupil has become a master and his imagery realizes what the dream of Otto III imagined: a Christian world-empire over all the countries of the age."‡

The age of Otto III was in many ways almost unimaginably different from our own. Yet, as the period in which Europe was emerging from the melting-pot of the Dark Ages it contained, to change the metaphor, the seed of future developments, and without understanding of it it is impossible to understand the Europe of today. There is, unfortunately, no longer the universal belief in the "two swords" of Pope and Emperor. It is far more difficult to bring about the union of peoples than the collaboration of rulers. Yet the principle of the equality of all nations still individually safeguarded though united, this principle which Otto cherished still has a meaning for the world today. To preserve the identity

* Dawson, op. cit.

† Paris, *Bibliothèque Nationale*.

‡ Hans Karlinger, quoted Dawson, op. cit.

of different national cultures and yet to achieve a European unity, this is still the problem, and our own time, chaotic as it is, and the starting-point for who knows what developments, is after all not so unlike Otto's. The collaboration of Church and State without encroachment into the sphere of each other is a modern problem too. The combined missionary activity of Otto and Boleslas has also a contemporary significance, though the question today is put in different terms. Short as it was, the reign of Otto III was one of great importance; visionary, no doubt, as all great schemes are visionary, but not for that reason divorced from reality.

But after all any study of Otto, however brief, must end with a regret: a regret that he died in 1002 with his work not only undone but in ruins around him. The unity he had planned was never fully realized, but after all he had not the twenty years granted to Napoleon, who failed far more abysmally, and less even than Alexander. And that, I think, is a note fitting enough to be the epitaph of Otto III.

R. ARNOLD JONES.

RECENT BOOK

The German Mind and Outlook. (Issued under the auspices of The Institute of Sociology and published by Chapman & Hall. 9s. 6d. net.)

AMID the welter of distorted propaganda which has been dinned into our ears for the last five years or so, many a reasonable person who refused to succumb to the lure of war hysteria must have longed for just such an objective and unimpassioned consideration of the German problem as is presented by this book. It consists of a series of six lectures by experts on various aspects of German affairs, delivered under the auspices of the Institute of Sociology during 1942 and 1943. The aim of the symposium, in the words of Professor G. P. Gooch, is "to aid in the understanding of the gifted, efficient, hard-working, disciplined, romantic, unstable, inflammable and formidable nation with which for the second time in a generation we find ourselves at war". The great merit of the book is that it seeks to explain the characteristics, bad and good, of the German people in the light of their geography, history and social structure, and avoids the inverted racialism of those who assume that there is something inherently "wrong" with the Germans as such.

Thus Professor Gooch introduces his useful survey of "German

Views of the State" by reminding us that the explanation of the attitude of the average modern German to political authority must be sought in his place on the map. Situated in the midst of the Central European plain without natural frontiers and surrounded by unfriendly neighbours, Germany could only become a nation-State through the medium of a powerful executive, a formidable army and a disciplined people.

And in his essay on "German Views of the German Mind" Professor Morris Ginsberg shows convincingly that the characteristics which are generally held to be typical of the German mentality—their political immaturity, their docility, the dualism between romantic idealism and cynical brutality—are not due to any inherent difference between the Germans and other peoples, but to their unfortunate historical development. The main factors in this development have been the lack of a steady social tradition and the speed and violence with which Germany was transformed into a great Power under the hegemony of Prussia. As a subsidiary factor Professor Ginsberg rightly includes the influence of the Lutheran tradition in widening the gap between thought and action and in increasing the tendency towards docility. "In teaching that matters of conscience were affairs of the inner will it accustomed men to accept calmly whatever befell them and to regard obedience and acquiescence as ordained by God." He is careful to guard against facile generalizations about a "German" mentality in view of the great regional differences between different parts of Germany, especially between Prussia and the Catholic south and west. And he points out that the recrudescence of violence and the rejection of humanitarian ideals since 1870 is a by no means exclusively German phenomenon.

The fruitful results of an historical and dispassionate approach to the German problem are best seen perhaps in Professor Roy Pascal's admirable essay on "Nationalism and the German Intellectuals", in which he discusses the rise of German nationalism as a historical process conditioned by the changing political, social and economic factors of the last 150 years. Above all he stresses the fundamental fact that German nationalism in our day is essentially different in character from the German nationalism of 100 or 150 years ago. Nothing, he rightly insists, is more untrue than that the Germans "have always been the same". On the contrary, no great nation has undergone such profound modifications as the German between, say, 1800 and 1900. Thus he makes it clear that the "nationalism" of the Romantic writers like Fichte, Jahn and the Schlegels was pacific and defensive in character, while even the bourgeois nationalism of the '30s and '40s was liberal and democratic and essentially different from the aggressive nationalism which developed after the Revolution of 1848. It is the failure to realize the changing nature of German nationalism which more than anything else vitiates the conclusions of so many writers on this controversial topic.

But German nationalism cannot be explained entirely in terms of historical and economic development, and it is the other side of the question, the emotional and irrational element in the German mind itself, which forms the subject of Professor E. M. Butler's lively essay on "Romantic Germanentum". This paper is a study of Romantic idealism, of the genesis and development of the myth of the inborn superiority of the German race and its consequent mission to impose its *Kultur* on the inferior races which form the rest of the world. Professor Butler traces the course of this disastrous creed through the minds of those whom she considers chiefly responsible for the growth of the myth—Hölderlin, Fichte, Nietzsche and George. But the great value of her essay lies in the clear distinction she makes between the admirable intentions of these thinkers—at least of the first three—and the dire results of their teachings. For it was in the very loftiness of their idealism and its indifference to factual truth that the danger lay. Here, I believe, Professor Butler has touched the essence of the German problem, namely the uncritical idealistic trend of the German intellect and the self-deception and self-intoxication to which it gives rise. For it is surely this fatal dichotomy between idealism and reality which lies at the root of the fantastic excesses of modern Germany.

These excesses, on the intellectual plane, provide the theme of Dr. S. D. Stirk's paper on *Myths, Types and Propaganda, 1919-1939*. In this paper Dr. Stirk gives an able and interesting account of the lurid and hysterical mental climate consequent on Germany's defeat in 1918 and its development into the ravings of the Nazi propaganda machine. In his view Wagner, Nietzsche and Stefan George were the spiritual ancestors, and Spengler, Moeller van den Bruck and Ernst Junger the most influential exponents, of this fantastic and dangerous dream-world, which became the official creed of the German nation after 1933. In the fatal fascination exercised during this period by the myths and types in question—the Myth of the Third Reich, the Myth of the Blood, the Prussian type, the type of the Hero, etc.—we have the ultimate and most disastrous expression of the idealizing tendency of the German mind referred to above.

It is a relief to turn from Dr. Stirk's picture of Nazi lunacy to Professor L. A. Willoughby's paper on the sanest and wisest mind that Germany has produced. In *Goethe and the Modern World* he shows us that Goethe is not only Germany's greatest poet, but that in his vision of the good life based on a harmony of mind and body, spirit and nature, he has much to teach both to a distracted Germany and to the world of today in general.

By its dispassionate approach to a controversial subject and its effort to explain and understand rather than merely to condemn, this symposium has made a valuable contribution to what remains perhaps the most important problem of our time. In one respect only does it give a distorted or at least incomplete picture of the German mind and outlook. The material on which these studies

are based is of course the writings and actions of the leading thinkers, authors and statesmen which Germany has produced. But the sum total of their words and deeds will often appear to anyone who knows Germany and the German people well from personal experience to have little bearing on the mind and outlook of the German Tom, Dick and Harry, of the millions of ordinary men and women of whom after all the German nation is mainly composed. In other words the picture of the German Mind and Outlook presented by this book is in the last resort that of the German intellectual. This is of course inevitable in the study of the national character of any nation, but I believe that in the case of the German it is apt to be specially misleading. For it might well be maintained that one of the leading German characteristics is the gulf which separates the ordinary German individual from his intellectual and political leaders. The average German is generally a likeable individual with many admirable virtues of kindness, honesty, industry and simplicity and with no more inclination to abstract idealism or brutal cynicism than the ordinary citizen of any other country. This is surely an important and encouraging factor in the total German situation today, even though, as we know from bitter experience, these good qualities are easily perverted to evil ends through the docility and political immaturity of the masses.

W. D. ROBSON-SCOTT.

We regret that the credit for an article on the Jewish question was attributed to "H. S. Oesterreicher". The author points out that his name is "John M. Oesterreicher."

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